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THE WORLD'S DEBATE

WILLIAM BARRY

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THE WORLD'S DEBATE

WORKS BY

DR. WILLIAM BARRY

Bearing on the Causes of the War

HERALDS OF REVOLT. European Literature from Goethe to Nietzsche

ERNEST RENAN } Second Empire and the
THE DAYSPRING } Commune of 1871

THE NEW ANTIGONE. The International and Russia

ARDEN MASSITER. Rome, Italy, and the Battle of Adowa

THE PAPACY AND MODERN TIMES. Last Period of The Temporal Power

THE WORLD'S DEBATE

An Historical Defence of the Allies

BY

WILLIAM BARRY

"Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo"
Virgil: Eclogue iv.

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY
NEW YORK
PUBLISHERS IN AMERICA FOR HODDER & STOUGHTON

Gibbon, concluding the story of the Crusades, has these words—

"By the command of the Sultan, the churches and fortifications of the Latin cities were demolished; a motive of avarice or fear still opened the Holy Sepulchre to some devout and defenceless pilgrims; and a mournful and solitary silence prevailed along the coast which had so long resounded with the WORLD'S DEBATE."

Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. vii, chap. lix, p. 277.

TO

HIS MAJESTY, ALBERT, KING OF THE BELGIANS:

AND TO

HIS EMINENCE, CARDINAL MERCIER, ARCHBISHOP OF MALINES:

WITH PROFOUND HOMAGE,
AND HOPE UNDISMAYED.

Belgium, unhappiest of all conquered lands,
  But happy still in the unconquered soul
  Of thy true King, whose daring self-control
Affronts the flame, scorn thou its burning brands.

Look where thy Cardinal lifts holy hands,
  Pleading to righteous Heaven; and in the scroll
  Of Martyrs count him, while thy sons pay toll
To death undaunted; God will break thy bands.

Belgium, be proud of Cardinal and King;
  Sceptre and crozier have served thee well;
  They reign who thus do serve; and thou shalt sing
  Thy Chant of Honour, rising from the Hell
  Which tries thy gold in fire; may Freedom's wing
Lift thee to heights where Peace and Justice dwell!

TO THE READER

MY apology for adding another book to the literature of the War, and my drift in so doing, are indicated on the title-page, but will bear a little more expansion, if you, dear Unknown, permit me to keep you one moment on the threshold while I welcome you in.

This volume I offer you is a record and a witness. It tells in sharp outline, yet I believe accurately, what were the contrasted ideals and the facts of history out of which our most searching, but not less hopeful, situation has come to be. And those who, like myself, have passed a long life in making acquaintance with such facts and ideals, are bound in my opinion to share their information among the many not so fortunate in their studies, and consequently bewildered by a sudden call to spend property, life—yea, all they possess—in defence of a Cause only faintly discernible to them. I condense and I explain the series of events on two lines—the one starting from Catholic England, the other from old heathen

Prussia, both crossing at length like swords in battle, to decide which shall be the victorious path of the future. So far as I am aware, this particular effort at enlightenment has not been attempted, or on a scale so large that the summing up is yet wanting.

But when I oppose Catholic England to heathen Prussia, my own point of sight is fixed. And you, my excellent reader, may feel surprise when I assure you that the principles for which the Allies are pouring out their blood and lavishing their treasure, bear the closest affinity to our principles—I mean to the constant tradition of the Roman Church. Nevertheless, proof and instance are not far to seek. The Gospel gives to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; but from Cæsar it withholds the things of God. In our Catholic creed there has never been room for the Absolute State; and never will such room be found. Hence, if the Middle Ages are identified (as in common talk and writing is almost always the case) with Catholicism, nothing can be more misleading than to fasten the pretensions, crimes and philosophy of modern Germany on something described as "medieval." Journalists do this because they are too busy to explore beyond the nearest hill. But the Middle Ages

might pretty well be defined as the period during which the Holy See fought on behalf of freedom against the Absolute State, impersonated in a succession of German Emperors from Henry IV to Louis of Bavaria. The Absolute State took to itself its great power and reigned in the eminently modern time which we call the Renaissance. Names and facts bear me out. The Roman Church has numbered among the Saints her own Gregory VII, who deposed the Franconian Henry IV. She has canonised Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, long venerated as champion of Church and People until Henry VIII condemned him of high treason and destroyed his shrine. She has raised to her altars in our days Thomas More, the author of *Utopia,* martyr in defence of Christian citizenship and old English freedom. And she calls Joan of Arc blessed, the Maid whose mission to deliver France from an alien yoke is thereby consecrated for ever.

Now, if there must needs be divisions, we may strive at least to get rid of misunderstandings; and that is my chief aim in the following pages. Born a Catholic, it was my fortune to live and move from childhood in the company of men and women whose faith

differed from mine — Anglicans, Dissenters, Liberals of many schools of thought; and I speak of all these as I learnt to know them, not on hearsay. I know England too; and with Cardinal Manning I would affirm that in our laws and institutions, going back to King Alfred and Edward the Confessor, we shall detect a spirit, a character, and a tendency to ordered freedom, which are profoundly Catholic. We are fighting that this inherited liberty of the Christian and the citizen may not be sacrificed to the Absolute State, which is Paganism armed with modern weapons and invoking, as Heine prophesied that one day it would, its old heathen gods to pull down our sanctuaries in ruin.

Thus I wrote in substance ere beginning my first chapter, on Lady Day, March 25, 1917. Now my last pages are out of hand; but I feel that the half has not been told. Autocracy in its assault on Democracy was my subject; but my hope was to prove by facts and history two things: first, that Absolute Power is doomed, and this I show to the conviction of all who believe in evidence allowed to tell its own tale; and, in the second place, that Democracy and Christianity ought to recognise

each other as by origin and spirit of the same nature. My conclusion would have been "Justitia et Pax osculatæ sunt" ("Justice and Peace have kissed").

It *is* my conclusion; none can overlook it in the brief "lyrical cry" with which *The World's Debate* ends. Moreover, it runs through the volume like the "deep andante moving in a bass of sorrow"—such sorrow as might reconcile worse misunderstandings than the quarrel between those who, to my profound grief, are estranged, seemingly, by their very ideals. But matters so grew on me, and events came so thronging, to prove the first half of my contention, that I had to leave the second shining like the Cross in mid-air—the Cross that appeared to Constantine—when I would fain have shared it as a Sacrament of healing with my readers. That Democracy by itself is an outward sign, needing to be filled and consecrated with Christ's redeeming grace, I have ever held. I hold it now. Should the time be given, I would endeavour to teach the youthful generation, who must take up our inheritance, that on the Seven Sacraments a perfect Humanity may be trained to this life and to that which is to come. But now I invite

them to read a little history, by way of learning how the twentieth century has opened with a cataclysm in which the old world went down.

One word more. I have spoken all along in the first person, as a spectator of the scenes through which my life passed. I could have taken the anonymous tone of science. But he that has beheld men and cities, and dwelt in lands across the sea, may be allowed this privilege. It is easier to read him; and for myself I look upon it as a duty here and now to set my name as a witness to the testimony I am giving. The cause of the Allies—and I mean it as upheld in especial by the British Empire, the United States, France, and Italy—is the cause of Right and of true Civilisation. I pray for its victory and its reign. *Esto perpetua!*

WILLIAM BARRY.

Leamington,
May 11, 1917.

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CHAPTER I

The Roots of Anarchy

TO-DAY is born of yesterday, but as if at once proud and ashamed, too often it disowns its pedigree. Not so the scalds, or prophets, or by whatever name they go, who "look before and after"—to them it is a tale of insight and foresight and the present was already contained in the past, *tanquam in causis;* whence they know that the future, could they see it, is here and now a potent reality, or, like the view that we catch in a glass of things behind us, it has a twofold being, real and ideal. To question this would be to make of history a chaos, "a mighty maze" *and yet* "without a plan." The fact is far otherwise. By fate and free will we came into the battle, long since dimly foreseen, which will fix the opening years of the twentieth century as beginning a new time, while ending the old one in the gloom of thunder and eclipse. Reader, I am going to ask you candidly, with me not less candid,

I promise you beforehand, to consider the wide historical landscape on which Armageddon unrolls its tragic "Haupt-und-Staats-action"—or play of Heaven and Earth. And we will have written above the stage these lines from our all-seeing poet—

> "Either there is a civil strife in Heaven;
> Or else the world, too saucy with the gods,
> Incenses them to send destruction."

I will not keep you with an interminable prologue. Remarkably enough, two happenings there are, of which all men have heard or are now feeling the consequences, brought by the Supreme Power we call Providence into the compass of a Hundred Days, at the end of 1648 and the beginning of 1649. These great events, so near in time to each other, stand yet memorable as well-heads of the Modern Europe into which we were born. One was the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia on October 24, 1648. The other was the execution of Charles Stuart, king of England, on January 30, 1649. This high mountain range forms the watershed of Modern History. The Treaty dissolved Medieval Europe into its parts; the execution did symbolically and in subsequent deed, as old Boswell of Auchin-

leck growled, to Johnson's indignation, "gar kings ken they had a *lith* in their neck." The Holy Roman Empire and Absolute Monarchy were doomed from those two days, October 24, 1648, and January 30, 1649.

To bear these dates in mind together should not be impossible. In our elementary schools, where a vague Royalism or Jacobitism hangs about still, the day and year of Charles's "taking off" are taught as indispensable to knowledge; but the Treaty of Westphalia fares differently. It belongs to continental nations—those queer foreigners of whom we need learn nothing except when they invaded us, or we them. Our English History is a water-tight compartment. Beyond it the people never look; and with how little outside it have our statesmen as a rule considered themselves bound to be acquainted? Hence the War, its surprises, its length, and its hazards—unnecessary if England had been ready with a store of facts bearing on our relations to Europe at large. I count myself a perfectly loyal subject. But I see no ground why that should hinder me from being a "good European." Had our governing men been of that disposition, I say not the war could never have come to pass. In my view,

hoc erat in fatis, it was bound to come to pass. But the British Empire would have beheld it moving on from afar and made preparation accordingly.

Now, to take the events of 1648 and 1649 in order as things fell out, first, what did this foreign Treaty of Westphalia signify? The English nation, busy in plucking down Charles and setting up Cromwell, was not represented there. By and by she would meet its consequences on many a field of battle. Poland, Muscovy, and Turkey were likewise absent. By weight of metal the chief contracting parties were Austria, which had finally suffered defeat, and France and Sweden, which had beaten her, in the Thirty Years War. Peace now came to seal the victory of West and North. Peace, after Central Europe had been wasted by sword, fire, and famine, all ministers of wrath in this greatest and last of the wars named of Religion! Henceforth in German lands not ruled as hereditary by the House of Habsburg, three Confessions might live side by side: the Lutheran, the Calvinist, and the Catholic—on certain terms. If a prince changed his religion he forfeited his dominions. But instead of one central authority, as hitherto, the "elected Roman Kaiser,"

who was also German king, now every petty lord became a sovereign, and the Fatherland, thus parcelled out, fell beneath the sway of some three hundred despots, all claiming to reign, temporal alike and spiritual, "von Gottes Gnaden," by the grace of God. The Empire still continued in name; but anarchy is the true account of it from henceforth until, smitten to death by Napoleon, it expired with ignominy in 1806. The balance-wheel of the old European system had been shattered by the Reformation; and at Münster the attempt was made to set up a fresh equilibrium, but the thing was not to be done.

From the year 1648 Germany sank lower and lower. For nearly a hundred years it became in the ruling classes an appanage of France. Its religion, literature, and social aims lost all native vigour. Of course, no German prince or poet was capable of writing as Frenchmen wrote, or of rehearsing in any fit manner at Herrenhausen the graces of Marly and Versailles. But there was compensation in keeping. While Austria, faithful to its name, went on pressing eastward, along the Danube and against the Turk, a new Power, of origin somewhat humble, as derived about 1170 from a certain Conrad of

Hohenzollern in Suabia, not far from the Lake of Constance, began without distinctly meaning it to aspire, as ambition will, to the high place left empty by the incapable House of Habsburg, summed up long afterwards by Bismarck in a scornful phrase, "those idiotic Archdukes." This new Power was Lutheran Prussia.

We can try to remember so much, at all events. Luther has four centuries of German history (1517-1917) to his account. Luther, a strong man, on any reckoning; "a genial ruffian," according to Huxley; a mystic in love with that very beautiful book of the spirit, the "Deutsche Theologie"; a monk armed at all points in the scholastic but curiously modern views of the Englishman, William of Ockham; a master in his native tongue, idiomatic, racy, humorous; the creator, not without help from older Catholic versions, of the German Bible; a Billingsgate polemic, whose words and illustrations are humiliating to man's self-respect; a fanatic, an hypochondriac, a born adversary of Rome—this was the modern Hermann, who broke the power of St. Peter in Deutschland as that ancient Arminius had cut to pieces the legions of Augustus. A strong man, I repeat; whether

a great man will be decided by our standard of greatness. A demonic force, it appears to me; and I rank him with Milton's Satan, with Goethe's Mephistopheles, as a "wondrous son of Chaos," not of Cosmos, in league with darkness rather than the light. He stalks out of the Norse mythology like a Frost-Giant; or he is Fenri's wolf opening capacious jaws to swallow down the sun. Pardon me, Reader; but I am by choice and temperament a lover of the South and its fine order, clear heaven, and wine-coloured seas; these are my preference—

> "*ποντίων τε κυμάτων*
> *ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα, παμμῆτόρ τε γῆ,*
> *καὶ τὸν πανόπτην κύκλον ἠλίου καλῶ.*"

Luther broke North from South; he threw Germans back upon their fierce old barbaric traditions of the Teutoburgian Forest, and thus he will be seen in historical perspective as the real founder of Prussia. He looked round for a sword. Most extraordinary it is, but a fact, that such a sword was already forging to his hand, if he did but know it, by another monk, but this time a soldier, bound under vows of celibacy and of service to Holy Church, the High Master of the Teutonic knights, Albert of Brandenburg, his junior

by seven years (Luther, 1483; Albert, 1490). This Hohenzollern converted "Prussia," which he held simply in trust for the Order, into his own hereditary Dukedom, and made the consenting, *i. e.* newly Protestant knights, his vassals by the still quasi-monastic name of "Junkers"—a name we have often heard since August, 1914. The business involved a feudal submission of this stolen "Ducal" Prussia to Sigismund of Poland, which was done at Cracow, October 8, 1525.

The sword of a future Germany was now laid on the anvil, to be smitten by many strokes and annealed in blazing fires, until it would cut as sharp as any magic Excalibur. The seeming Peace, but veritable anarchy, of Westphalia put it edged and tempered into the hands of the Great Elector. When he laid it down, Brandenburg, under the style and title of Prussia, was ready to proclaim itself a kingdom. That is the next memorable date, January 18, 1701. I will join it straightway with another, which many surviving like myself can call to mind—January 18, 1871, when William I, King of Prussia, was acclaimed German Emperor in the Palace of Versailles by the assembled kings and princes of the two groups, north and south of the Main. In the Hall of

Glories dedicated to Louis XIV, Germany took her revenge upon France for the dismemberment effected in Westphalia upon the old Empire.

Such, then, is the significance to us of that Treaty; it means the rise of Prussia. Note well how the new Empire began, for thereby hangs the whole story. From an Order of Catholic military monks, resembling the Knights of St. John, their landed possessions were forcibly seized by the Grand Master, who was sworn to protect them against all comers. He annexed this great heritage to his own family for ever. And thus he made a secular State from property and dominions which had long been consecrated to the sanctuary. But observe that, in ceasing to be a monk, Albert of Brandenburg became a pope. I am speaking literally. According to the terms of the famous compact among Teuton princes, finally and formally sealed at the Westphalian Treaty, *Cujus regio, ejus religio,* the land-ruler fixes the land's religion.

What can that matter to us now? you may ask. In this way it matters. We have been astonished, nay, perplexed, by the sheep-like docility of an entire people to any and every dictate of its Government. That those mil-

lions should have no conscience of their own; that when bidden not only to perpetrate but to justify atrocities in their nature most revolting, Germans of all ranks should without a murmur have thus prostituted their very souls, is a thing to be accounted for; and here is the explanation. The State, as Luther conceived of it, was the one Divine authority left as a public power in the world. To resist it under whatsoever provocation was a sin unto death. His language on the Peasants' Rising in 1525 is well known, and so violent that I would rather not quote it. For I am not composing an invective against Luther. All I wish at this point is to show that, on his principles, the only visible Church is the State, and consequently the only visible Pope is its head. We are familiar with a doctrine and practice like unto this from the proceedings of Henry VIII, who, claiming the power of the keys, exercised his prerogatives over and over again in drawing up variations of belief, and laid upon his subjects the duty under formidable penalties of accepting them.

But in Germany the State has been a never-dying Henry VIII. It has never ceased to command that public opinion should follow its decrees in all things. The ugly name for

a still uglier thing is Cæsaro-Papism. Every little tyrant, reigning over a few square miles and a handful of Germans bound to "his Transparency," was a Pontifex Maximus, who could turn these pliant subjects from Lutheran to Calvinist and back again, when it suited his policy or his pleasure. Thus Luther and Lutheranism granted to the Prince all that was refused to the Pope.

This conception of the King-Pontiff is fundamental in the Prussian State. It is also heathen, and very old. It is profoundly anti-Christian. Catholics and Puritans have both stood out against it in the name of the New Testament. As for modern Englishmen, to such a distance are they removed from reverence to "His Most Sacred Majesty," illustrated, as Carlyle would say, by a Nell Gwynne and Charles II, that a present claim on the part of Kaiser Wilhelm to be Heaven's Vice-gerent stirs them to scornful laughter. Among the grounds on which they feel disposed to think him mad—at all events, like Hamlet, "north-north-west"—by no means the least persuasive appears to them an extravagance so far out of fashion, as well as in itself ridiculous. When in proclamations not merely to his soldiers but to the Poles

whom he trampled down, or whom he is invading, this play-actor declares with histrionic gesture that the Lord has sent him, as if he were the Messiah, good sense judges that he might with equal decorum announce himself as "Brother of the Sun and Moon." Rightly so; but here begins the first lesson of the dreadful War Service we are celebrating; and we have not learnt it yet.

To us, for reasons I will give in due course, the Cæsar-Pope is an outworn superstition. He lies buried in the coffin of Charles I. But to the Teuton race he is yet alive; he is their Commander of the Faithful, the Caliph of Berlin, and armed with a two-edged sword. He has never laid aside the High Mastership, not now of an Order but a Nation, which consecrates him to his sacred office. Wilhelm is a stage-player, indeed, deserving to be compared with Nero rather than with Caligula; but on that account he seizes readily and renders dramatically the part assigned to him as Hohenzollern, as Deutscher Kaiser; and he proclaims the story of his birth and heaven-descended dignity, in perfect good faith, to a listening but scandalised earth.

Wars led by a Commander of the Faithful are, in effect, wars of religion. If Westphalia

saw the end of the last, we are looking on at the progress of another which, in more than one point, resembles and repeats it. The sword that Luther desired, wrought by Albert and his successors into a mighty eater of men, has grown to be the War-Machine behind which Wilhelm, Emperor and Pope, rides into battle. He takes with him a nation of slaves and believers. He calls upon "our old German God" to help him by right of clanship. These follies have the fury of madness in them. But we, in our simplicity, still fancy them put on, whereas they are the innermost, subconscious conviction of a people broken to servility during centuries, incapable of undoing the spell which holds them down.

Now consider the second thing fixed by the Westphalian Treaty of 1648. This was the recognition of boundaries, hereafter pretty nearly inviolable, between the Roman Church and the Churches of the Reformation. No writer has told the story in fewer or more effective words than Macaulay, whose essay on Ranke's *History of the Popes* comes nearer to philosophic thought than all the other pages he covered with phrases and pictures. There are those who affect some disdain of the eloquent Whig, descended from Norse and

Celt, as though his utterances were the flourish of kettledrums in an orchestra. But Macaulay, the man of letters, had seasons when he prophesied; and this hour devoted to Von Ranke caught him up to Pisgah heights, whence he surveyed the past lying at his feet and the future very far off. He had no metaphysics; the question which he opened concerning Religion, whether, viz. it holds or exhibits any law of progress, Macaulay was incapable of answering. His temper, cast in a secular mould, never could bear visionaries. Yet in this one essay there is a touch of the visionary. Why did Rome lose what she lost at the Reformation? Why, fifty years from Luther's uprising, could Catholicism "scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Mediterranean"? Why, again, one hundred years after it, could "Protestantism scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic"? And why the settlement which was finally reached in 1648? "When, at length," says Macaulay, "the Peace of Westphalia was concluded, it appeared that the Church of Rome remained in full possession of a vast dominion which in the middle of the preceding century she seemed on the point of losing. No part of Europe remained Protestant, except that part which had become

thoroughly Protestant before the generation which heard Luther preach had passed away."

I am not proposing, at my present stage, to submit reasons for these things which travel farther than those alleged by Macaulay. Later on, that task shall be attempted. Our concern just now is with Rome's actual circumference as it was traced at the Westphalian congress. It is a remarkable one. If we take the map of Europe, we shall see that it lay very largely within the lines traced by the Emperor Valentinian in the year A.D. 364, as dividing the West from the East. On one side we reckon Thrace, Asia, and Egypt; on the other, which is ours, Illyricum, Italy, the Gauls, Britain, Spain, and Africa. The province of Illyricum included classic Greece or Hellas, on portions of which the Venetian Republic held a faltering grasp until 1715. Africa had long fallen a prey to Islam and nondescript Barbarians. The Britons, though more under influences emanating from Geneva than from Wittenberg, were fiercely anti-papal; yet the Church of England showed a significant spirit of compromise, and gloried in its Via Media. But Italy, the Gauls, and Spain kept faithful to Rome. The Low Countries were almost equally partitioned, as

to numbers, between Catholics and the Reformed. Switzerland was in much the same condition. And the Rhine, the Main, the Danube had become, though not altogether or exactly, bounds which the Roman missionaries found it hard to cross. Bohemia was Catholic; Hungary had its Dissidents. Far away from the purview of Rome, to whose empire it was never subdued but whose faith it embraced with enthusiasm, Ireland, soon to be given over to "the curse of Cromwell," was earning by its afflictions the title of the Martyr-Nation. As remote in the Middle East as Ireland in the North-West, another people resembling the Irish by their military spirit, their eloquence, brilliancy, and enormous difficulties in setting up a State on firm foundations—I mean the Poles—were Catholics too, and with them we must count the Lithuanians.

"At first," says Macaulay once more, "the chances seemed to be decidedly in favour of Protestantism; but the victory remained with the Church of Rome. On every point she was successful," that is, in the debatable land between the south and north of Europe. He concludes: "If we overleap another half century (from 1557) we find her victorious and dominant in France, Belgium, Bavaria, Bohe-

mia, Austria, Poland, and Hungary. Nor has Protestantism, in the course of two hundred years, been able to reconquer any portion of what was then lost." The essayist wrote in the year 1840. His last observation holds good to-day.

To strike a balance of gains and losses between contending Christians is a melancholy task. The thing which at Münster and Osnabrück stereotyped itself in the world's history was a world's catastrophe—the break-up of Christendom. It told, to an infinite extent, of evil above and below the dividing line, though in ways not similar. The gain resulting inside these communions by emulation or enforced strictness, put it as high as you please, requires to be weighed against estrangement and the scandal of controversies, unbeliefs, scepticisms, and widespread "indifference in religion" growing ever among modern nations. To Rome the consequences have been incalculable. "The multitude of nations which are within the fold of the Church," so Newman wrote in his *Apologia*, "will be found to have acted for its protection." And he goes on to remark, "It seems to me that Catholicity is not only one of the notes of the Church, but according to the divine purpose one of its

securities. I think it would be a very serious evil (which divine mercy avert!) that the Church should be contracted in Europe within the range of particular nationalities. . . . And assuredly I think that the loss of the English, not to say the German element in its composition, has been a most serious misfortune." That misfortune became at Westphalia the necessary preamble to all treaties, laws, constitutions, confederacies in every part of the globe where Europeans were called upon to act. We live under the deep shadow of it now.

For consider the loss to humanity, to fraternity. When I celebrate the chief Christian rite, which is that of friendship, "commonly called the Mass," according as it is noted in the first Prayer Book of King Edward VI, I can solemnize it in Notre Dame at Paris, in St. Ambrose's at Milan, over the body of St. Mark at Venice, in the Annunziata which is at Florence, or at the very Confession of St. Peter in Rome, where indeed I celebrated my first Mass forty-four years ago. And I recall with very tender exultation how often I said Mass and gave Communion to a kneeling crowd in the most heavenly of all God's temples, the beloved St. Mark's at Venice.

But, although meaning nought but good to my fellow-men, I cannot say it in St. Paul's, London, or in Westminster Abbey, at St. Edward's shrine, or in St. Giles's, Edinburgh, or in Christ Church, Dublin. That is a grief to me, a rending of the heart. Not because of the glory still haunting those hallowed spots (yet who would forbid tears even on that account?) but by reason of its making me strange to men—

"Men my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new;
That which they have done the earnest of the things which they shall do."

And I mourn that the breaking up of home should have made two camps—I had almost written two prisons. I know them both well. Brought up, though a Catholic, among Protestants of the most austere Puritan type, I speak of that which I have seen, not by hearsay. Our Shakespeare must have felt something of this pity at heart when he drew an autumn similitude from the forsaken cloisters—

"Bare, ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang."

And our manly, pious old Samuel Johnson; there was more than sentiment or romantic moonlight poetry in his indignation at the

havoc wrought upon those beautiful and quiet places where the converted Barbarian had discovered how he might live in peace. The continuity of European development had been unbroken before the days of Luther; yes, even though the Western Empire fell; for the Church carried it on, and created the institutions as well as inspired the art and the best legislation of the Middle Ages. But now the Law of Compensation, whereby each part of our civilised world contributes to the progress of the whole, found itself thwarted and made of none effect; since forces that should have worked together in harmony were henceforth working to their reciprocal destruction. The South decayed because the North revolted.

Could any wise man's son or sincere Christian deem this a consummation devoutly to be wished? Was it unavoidable? Then let us acknowledge and lament it in sackcloth and ashes. The thing which had come to pass immediately was the setting up of Nations as Churches, with denial of the International Church. This broke the strength of Christendom precisely when, by the discovery and conquest of America, its power might have been doubled. It left Rome in a state of exhaustion, Germany wasted to a wilderness,

Spain in decline, Britain curiously isolated then and ever after from the Continent. One clear consequence we read, which came strangely enough in the wake of a system said to be established on Private Judgment, or as we now term it Free Thought. Monarchies limited during the Middle Ages by open compacts with their people, by the feudal network of sworn engagements between the king and his vassals, but above all by the dedication of principalities and powers to the Lord Christ, whose Vicar was their acting suzerain, threw off these restraints and declared themselves absolute.

For centuries the Holy See had resisted the German Emperors, Franconian, Hohenstauffen, who were bent on making their will the law of Church and State. The clergy of the West claimed immunities, taxed themselves in their own synods, and in no slight degree fulfilled the duties we now assign to a constitutional Opposition. But just before Luther was born a constellation of unlucky stars frowning on this medieval balance of power brought in, along with the Renaissance, what has been rightly called "the Age of the Despots." Nothing could be so false to history as the language popular in journalism which

condemns any tyrant's act of violence or oppression as "medieval." The full-blown tyrant, whether Louis XI of France, our own Henry Tudor, the Fleming Charles V, his son Philip II, or the French Bourbon who caps them all, Louis XIV, was produced by the Renaissance, whose beginnings we trace far back, even to the republication of the Imperial Roman Law in the early twelfth century.

Well, I have to insist that the "solely sovereign sway and masterdom" fatal to liberty, exercised by these men, are abhorrent to the genius, the tradition, and the true interests of the Catholic Church. All who glance into her chronicles know that there was such a man as Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII. They have, at least in its main lines, followed the quarrel, hardly ever pausing, between the Sacerdotium and the Imperium, or spiritual independence and secular force. Whatever judgment may be passed on the acts of popes, councils, or saints in that combat, the fact remains that their strivings went to the limitation of royal prerogatives. It can never be otherwise in principle. For kingdoms are of this world, and the Catholic Church holds of the world to come. A king may be "Defender of the Faith" by papal diploma; to make him

"Definer of the Faith" is to fall into heresy. No pope would subscribe to the Lutheran Westphalian doctrine, "*Cujus regio, ejus religio.*" The tyrant must halt on the threshold of the Holy Place, otherwise the doom of Uzziah will strike him, and as a leper and usurper he will be driven forth. On such an issue battle is joined between Rome and Prussia.

If we widen the compass of the word "Faith," so as to take in whatsoever belongs chiefly or altogether to man's inward faculties; for example, his conscience, mental systems, fine arts and the like, which have among them a most intimate relation; we shall be obliged to grant that, in refusing to subject the Church to an absolute secular lord, the clergy were protecting civilisation. They were finding a way of escape from tyranny, yet holding up ideals opposed to anarchy. The Treaty of Westphalia by its inclusion of the spiritual domain within the king's pale was promoting the one and the other. Both tyranny and anarchy indeed were already grappling, as the story of England shows. To that story, with its controlling event, the judicial execution of Charles I, let us now turn. If on October 24, 1648, we might have calculated the horoscope

of a future German Empire, Prussian, absolute, exalting itself above all that is called God or worshipped; on January 30, 1649, we might have beheld the vindication on a public scaffold of the medieval doctrine that a ruler must answer before man, as well as at the divine judgment-seat, for his unconstitutional acts. This was the second and, as I believe, the more momentous of those two historical scenes which distinguish the great Hundred Days of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER II

How England solved her Kaiser-problem

WITH music and passion the late A. C. Swinburne warned all sovereign persons in his *Songs Before Sunrise,* to the effect that—

"Night hath its one red star, Tyrannicide."

A fine verse, reminiscent of another in Schiller's *Wallenstein,* and it stays in the memory. Like a death-knell it keeps ringing through certain historical episodes, and through the centuries, down to the murder of a Royal and Imperial Archduke, the Austrian Franz Ferdinand, with his wife, on that June 28, 1914, when, as on a mighty stage, beheld of the whole world, there was raised the curtain of war. I pause to reflect, not I hope fancifully, on the constant succession of symbolic acts, as though we were witnessing an Apocalypse, which has accompanied or foreshadowed the present course of events. From Charles I of England to Charles I of Austria may well figure in histories by and by as a great cycle complete.

If a title be wanted, let us call it "The King's Evil." For it is a tragedy of a divine pretension claimed, found out, and finally rejected. The Greek name, when we use cold scientific terms, is "Autocracy." But warm-hearted indignant men and women denounce it as "Tyranny."

Whether it be lawful to kill a tyrant; and, if lawful, how it may be sinlessly done, by shooting, stabbing, poisoning, secretly or openly—these are questions for debating societies. In their time they occupied and divided theologians. Perhaps I may say that there are two questions: "Can a king commit treason against his people?" and "If he can, what is to be done with him?" The human race, on the whole, is for good and sound reasons instinctively loyal to such a degree that it will suffer almost any extremity of oppression before taking in hand to overturn authority. That is the Law of the Tribe. But there shines above it on heavenly heights the Law of Justice, with which is no respect of persons, and woe to that person who strikes against it!

From another point of view and custom of language "persons" are the very subjects which this Law contemplates; for it draws an infinite

distinction between "persons" and "things." Every right of man over man is a personal relation as between men; and tyranny may be described as the degradation of the subject, who is as much a person as any ruler, to the status of a mere "thing," a piece of property, a passive instrument, used simply as a means to some end outside himself. To use a whole society called a Nation after this fashion is beyond possible doubt a crime against Justice, and a very high crime. That kings may be guilty of it the "chronicles of wasted time" do all too clearly, and in every succeeding generation prove. And tyrannicide has answered it with, "Killing no murder." As Milton writes: "No nation under heaven but in one age or other hath done the like." Then, referring to England, he proudly adds—and let us admire his unparalleled majesty of speech —"The difference only is, which rather seems to us matter of glory, that they for the most part have without form of law done the deed by a kind of martial justice, we by the deliberate and well-weighted sentence of a legal judicature."

Yes, John Milton, so did the Court pronounce; and yet "by the power of the sword and a law not to be found in any of the

books." Charles Stuart was not a Doge, like Marino Faliero, whose vacant place in the Hall of the Great Council at Venice leaves on the traveller a more distinct impression than all the portraits of all the Doges painted there. Could an anointed hereditary sovereign be a traitor? He denied it, England asserted it, and Whitehall closed the debate and the scene. I find a strange but true resemblance as I turn over the pages of Milton, Clarendon, and Carlyle, between the actors, the causes, the conclusions, of that era named from the "Great Rebellion" and our own. The Kaiser is Charles I; the Germans are the Cavaliers; we are the Independents; and, as I trust, our armies will be the Ironsides. But in essence and issue the problem has grown from British to European, to American. That I am not inventing an imaginary likeness where none exists, I will now endeavour to show.

Charles I was not a man of conspicuous ability or in any way abnormal. Each of the leading Englishmen who took his part, or who acted and fought on the other side, was in some degree remarkable, as Laud, Strafford, Hyde, and again Hampden, Falkland, Pym—Milton and Cromwell being out of all comparison with any in their time.

The romance of the Stuarts has cast a glamour about Charles the Martyr; had he not been martyred, what would his dearest partisans have cared for his remembrance? On the other hand, Kaiser Wilhelm, though no true genius, illustrates the view put forward by Lombroso that insanity bears a kinship to genius; for the Kaiser is abnormal, explosive in word and deed, as unresting as a maniac, and conceited of himself as artist, tactician, preacher, sportsman, and universal dilettante. He, too, comes of the Stuarts; but in his longing to be held a virtuoso he reproduces Frederick the Great, and would lay himself open to sarcasm as piercing from Voltaire. Yet, on this difference between the men I am going to set up an argument, viz. that the evil done by the one and doing by the other cannot be deemed a personal characteristic. It was due in Charles, and it is evidently traceable in the Kaiser, to the system which both inherited; it is the King's Evil.

In Charles it appeared as a dull obstinacy to be conquered by no changes of fortune. Andrew Marvell praises him "upon that memorable scene," where he laid down his life. I will praise him too for such dignity and courage, worthy of his ancestress at Fotheringhay.

But he was doing homage to a false ideal; and he died the enemy of man. In like manner the German Emperor, who would carry over the world that same false doctrine of the Absolute King, may in this be a sample of fortitude that the horrors of his own enactment which he has witnessed in Belgium, France and Poland, have not killed him outright. He sees them and sees them not. Why? because of his theory, which is an obsession, that he, William of Hohenzollern, is the purpose, end, and divine meaning of all those myriad creatures sacrificed to his designs. We must get close to the heart of this, and we can do it most directly in Milton's prose works.

I know, of course, what Matthew Arnold has written, scornfully yet not without warrant, of Milton's vituperation in arguing with his opponents. If Salmasius scolds like a fish-wife, the poet who delights our soul in *Comus* retorts with a licence and a ribald humour such as we can but endure in Aristophanes. It is a pity, and it is true. Their learning in the classics led equally astray the French pedant, who knew no better, and the poet engarlanded who should not have trailed his singing robes in this mire. The point I am

enforcing lies free of sophistry and ribaldry alike. It is as patent in Salmasius defending Charles as in Milton's attack upon him. No veil of impenetrable darkness hangs over the life and the deeds of Mary Stuart's grandson, like the cloud which hides that inner tragedy of the *Casket Letters*. Here the facts are not in dispute. What Charles did and why he did it were patent to the world even before he came to his untimely end. With Mary Queen of Scots the problem is largely a matter of evidence; with Charles it turns almost exclusively on principle.

And so Mary appeals to lovers of romance and the insoluble; but when we are discussing her grandson it is the "instans tyrannus," or the Absolute King whom he embodies, that fixes our attention. Milton's successive works, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649), his *Observations on Ormond's Articles of Peace* (the same year), his unsparing *Eikonoclastes*, or *The Image-Breaker* (also 1649), in answer to *Eikon Basilike*, or *Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings*, all give us, in prose not less grave and massy than the didactic portions of his poems, the lineaments under which he saw an English monarch who would play the Oriental despot and make of

every law a personal decree to be altered, revoked, or disregarded at his good pleasure.

Milton showed no mercy; some accusations he brought which were monstrously untrue; but his main contention was just and demonstrable, as he proved, out of Charles's own mouth. How, indeed, we must inquire, should it not be so, when the king's creed about kingship was what we know it to have been? All that the hired advocate of Leyden, Claude Saumaise, desired to achieve was merely to call these acts of royalty by another name, defending them by the prerogative which, in his philosophy born of the Renaissance, made the Supreme Ruler irresponsible. And all that Milton accomplished, in his two great *Defensions of the English People,* was to convert into a Latin fit for gods the indictment already framed by him in his mother-tongue.

While setting up these imperishable monuments of genius and freedom, he did likewise deliver sentence on every after-attempt to enslave Europe under the pretence of the divine right of autocracy. He speaks to us now with a sanction derived from the victories of English political wisdom, which in two hundred years has made the round of the globe. Nothing less than a crucial experiment was in question.

The English idea of constitutional law and ordered liberty we know by experience, and all nations are learning it, is as commanding in political science as is the principle of gravitation formulated by Newton in physics. If Newton showed how the whole universe is balanced, our creative thinkers, acting on a national character whose instinct for justice they rendered into practice, have discovered the scales of reason in which authority and obedience are equally poised. Their discovery is, in Tennyson's words,

"Our crowned Republic's crowning common sense."

The image of a king that Milton broke was, in truth, an idol. Long worshipped, ever since Pharaoh the monarch offered sacrifice to himself as Pharaoh the god, Ammon-Ra, this illusion confounded the man with his office; and while "dressed in a little brief authority," it flung round him the divine attributes. Charles I could not be brought to understand that as king he was the creation of law, and *that* the law of the community over which he ruled. If he has even the shadow of Divine Right it falls first on the collective people. This to generations nurtured on sound political thought is a commonplace;

to the old Cavalier and the modern Junker it is blasphemy. But reason and fact are there to show that society made the king and not the king society. Or, putting the same truth in modern terms, the nation creates its own organs. It creates each of them for its own purpose, and when they fail to do their duty or do the very opposite, the body politic suffers, and they must be reformed or removed.

Subjects, then, are neither the king's children nor his chattels; a State is something different in origin and intention from a family, as Aristotle pointed out long ago when he wrote the first page of his *Politics,* and as Milton quoted from him in reply to Salmasius: "For that there is not a numerical but a specifical difference betwixt a kingdom and a family." Milton continues, "For at first men entered into societies, not that any one might insult over all the rest, but that in case any should injure another, there might be laws and judges to protect them from wrong, or at least to punish the wrongdoers." And Aristotle sums the matter grandly: "He that first founded civil society was the cause of the greatest good; for as by the completion of it man is the most excellent of living beings, so without law and justice he would be the worst of all. For

nothing is so difficult to subdue as injustice in arms; but these arms man is born with, viz. prudence and valour, which he may apply to the most opposite purposes; for he that abuses them will be the most wicked, the most cruel, the most lustful, and most gluttonous being imaginable. Justice is, then, a political virtue, by the rules of which the State is regulated, and these rules are the criterion of what is right."

Now a king like Charles I or his later kinsman and imitator, the Kaiser, holds himself to be not, indeed, a beast but a god; in his own eyes he is *hors la loi,* as above it and beyond its reach. When he declares, as Wilhelm did, that "the king's will is the highest law," and again, "There is no law but my law"; or asserts that he is answerable only to God, meaning in another world, at the Day of Judgment, and certainly not to men, to what can this amount except doing away with all penalties annexed to tyranny?

In such case the "divinity that doth hedge a king" makes of him in the full force of the words a chartered libertine. He, the supreme law-giver, is not bound by law. His oath is not taken to the people; therefore Charles argued that he might construe it as he listed. The

promise that he makes is not a pledge. In every negotiation he reserves the royal right of breaking any clause or all together, if he thinks any part derogatory to his crown. Of the fact he, sole and singular, is the judge in his own breast, and this he terms the king's conscience. In short, between him and his people there is no reciprocity.

Since I began writing this chapter an august chief of a very great nation has translated the view here drawn out into more general terms. "A stedfast concert for Peace," said the President of the United States on April 2, 1917, advising Congress to declare a state of war with Germany, "can never be maintained except by the partnership of democratic nations." And why so? He gives the reason: "No autocratic Government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants." We have at length, in these few sentences, plucked out the heart of arbitrary power and laid it bare before the sun. This was the innermost spring of Charles's dealings with friend and foe. This to-day is Kaiserism, a crowned and sceptred Unfaith. It cries by the lips of an earlier tyrant in Shakespeare, John Lackland—

> "What earthly name to interrogatories
> Can task the free breath of a sacred king?"

Beyond the simple abuse of power by violence, which might spring from various bad motives, but need be no more than a passing plague, lies the fundamental error of a system in which the king—and it could only be a king—remains for ever by inherent claim outside and above the society he governs. This royal isolation, "without the assistance of a mortal hand" to restrain while supporting the rod of empire, is what I have pointed to as the "King's Evil." It breaks the divinely ordained bonds which hold men together—the pledged word, the recognised human dignity, and the sense of honour that should follow on these things. It frustrates the very end for which authority exists.

Of the Kaiser's delinquencies there will be enough said by and by. Looking back to his Stuart precursor in this bad way, I remark that Whig historians have dwelt with justice on the "instances of ill-faith," as Hallam gently observes, "accumulated as they are through the life of Charles," which "render the assertion of his sincerity a proof either of historical ignorance, or of a want of moral delicacy." And in his Essay on Milton we find Macaulay saying, "The nation had to deal with a man who made and broke promises

with equal facility, a man whose honour had been a hundred times pawned, and never redeemed." Ludlow the regicide lays this down as one of his chief reasons for consenting to Charles's death—Ludlow, one of "the bad revolting stars" which could endure him no longer as the sun of the English firmament. "I was fully persuaded," he writes, "that an accommodation with the king was unsafe to the people of England, and unjust and wicked in the nature of it. The former, besides that it was obvious to all men, the king himself had proved by the duplicity of his dealing with the Parliament, which manifestly appeared in his own papers, taken at the battle of Naseby and elsewhere." But the Glamorgan papers proved that Charles could be guilty of falsehood double and treble, to Irish Catholics and of course to his own servants; as his earlier unfaith led Strafford vehemently to exclaim, "Put not your trust in princes."

Now let us keep always in mind that this unhappy man's dissimulation and downright lying were the fruits of a perverted conscience; by no means were they sins of frailty committed by a weak mortal driven to bay. His theory justified, and his mode of action thence resulting demanded them. To talk, as

Hallam does, of "insincerity" is superficial. According to the doctrine of absolute power laid down, for example, by James I, and accepted, so far as words went, by some of the lawyers and a multitude of the divines who helped the Stuarts to their ruin as a dynasty, the king owed nothing of strict obligation to his people which they could claim or vindicate in any effectual way. Truth and justice he owed to God, not to them. "Shall we make enquiries," said Heath, attorney-general, in arguing on behalf of the Crown, "whether his commands are lawful?—Who shall call in question the justice of the king's actions, who is not to give account for them?" Such was the Royal Charter which brought its victim in front of the banqueting room at Whitehall, and left him there under the axe of the man in a mask, well representing the anonymous People who judged him.

But England's answer to this whole contention had been given by a great lawyer in the Latin axiom which to all intents we still maintain, "Nolumus leges Angliæ mutare," "We will not have our English Constitution destroyed." Before the Stuarts, before the Hohenzollerns, there was the Common Law,

protected as time went on by "the ancient, constant, and undoubted right and usage of Parliaments to question and complain of all persons, of what degree soever, found grievous to the commonwealth, in abusing the power and trust committed to them by their sovereign." This, in effect, amounted to the responsibility of the king's ministers, and since he could not act without agents it took away from his person what it added to his immunity. Not the man Charles Stuart, but Charles King of England in his courts, beginning with the High Court of Parliament, had jurisdiction over the people of England. The Common Law was the fount of freedom.

The nation, thus constituted, was superior to all its parts, not excluding the king. He had no such thing as absolute power; it was unknown to law and incompatible with it. "His Majesty's immediate act and will," being a mere personal command, had no force in itself to compel or coerce the subject in his property or his person; all must be done according to law, and with a remedy in the courts for any wrong suffered by illegal procedure. Otherwise, "every statute from the time of Magna Charta, designed to protect the personal [and the real] liberties of English-

men, became a dead letter." The new Magna Charta (1628), which was called the "Petition of Right," and to which, after attempts at evasion, Charles most unwillingly assented, links modern England with medieval, while it traces the line upon whose mounting curve the world's political progress henceforth was to be followed.

From all that is here briefly set down it will appear that, while the execution of Charles might be described in Carlylean language as a "doom's blast" of autocracy, and a notice to quit served on absolute sovereigns then and ever since, the solution of the problem raised by him lay elsewhere than on the scaffold. Regicide is no remedy. Still indulging in quotation, we might say, and it is the truth of history, "Uno avulso, non deficit alter." "The royal oak is not so easily cut down." And by wisdom, as was proved in this fortunate realm, we may preserve the golden bough. The most illustrious tyrannicide that ever stained human chronicles, that "lofty scene, to be acted over in states unborn and accents yet unknown," when, according to Cicero, there was no honest Roman but dipped his hands in Cæsar's blood, what good thing did it bring forth? It gave Rome an Augustus for a

Julius, no gold instead of bronze, but a consummate actor instead of "the foremost man of all this world." We will not canonise our tyrant-killers. Let us show mankind a more excellent way. Milton, whose indictment of Charles cannot, in its leading points, be gainsaid, was under the necessity of taking service with Cromwell, a king *de facto* stern as death; and Cromwell, I think honestly, wanted to be king by law that the ancient Constitution of the land might not perish.

Just upon forty years after Charles had expiated his evil deeds, a son of his, not one atom less blind and obstinate than his father, provoked the nation by lawless attacks on the persons and property of the men of England. But this time the axe did not fall. A legal fiction saved the people from any repetition of so useless an expedient. James was held to have abdicated, and the "Declaration of Right" completed that true restoration of English liberties which the "Petition of Right" had called for but could only prophesy. The old immemorial relation of king and people was renewed. Their compact, binding on both sides, took its full effect. Monarchy was limited, not abolished. Ministers acted by the royal authority, but were responsible to the

nation in Parliament assembled. The power of the purse remained with the Commons. And by the striking device of the annual Mutiny Bill the power of the sword, for control of which the Great Rebellion had come about, was left in the King's hands, yet on condition of his using it wisely in deference to the Parliament's decisions touching peace and war.

Every one of these provisions, we see now and experience proves, was a master-stroke of genius. No wonder that the British Constitution became, during the eighteenth century, "the envy and admiration of surrounding nations!" Who will not confess that in a matter of highest moment, where the Renaissance went utterly wrong, these Pyms and Seldens and Maynards and Halifaxes and Somerses—let me be just and add the name of John Locke, their philosopher in this province—had seen the true idea of a self-governed, self-balanced community, free at last from false mystical delusions which themselves led to anarchy by making tyranny inevitable and eternal? It was the axe of absolute power, not the glaive of freedom, that slew Charles Stuart. He perished by his own weapon, for in the last analysis the tyrant

relies on brute force as the rebel does who strikes in a frenzy against him.

England had her Kaiser problem three centuries ago, which it took her a hundred years to solve—reckoning from James I to George I—and most triumphantly did she meet and solve it. There was a second problem, not less important to the welfare of mankind—that of administering justice justly,—and thanks to her trial by jury, her system of evidence, and the independence of her judges, she has solved that also. These are among her proudest titles to the gratitude of all succeeding ages. They constitute her the champion of the rights of man, which are God-given and can never be repealed. They justify, while they explain, the magnificent fact that in this war she is leading the nations to victory.

CHAPTER III

Prussia's Rise and Claim to "Kultur"

I CANNOT begin what I have now to throw on paper without first paying a tribute of affection and regret to the memory of my dear old German master, Karl Kemen, who died last year at Boppard on the Rhine. My heart is heavy when I think of him and of our last excursion together in the company of his devoted wife. It was on a Sunday in summer—a German Sunday—bright and peaceful; and we went by the river to Königsstein, to see the castle there. "O Deutschland, hoch in Ehre!" sings the minstrel; and how gladly would I take up the refrain! My venerated professor spoke and wrote his three languages—German, French, English—idiomatically perfect. He was by far the best master I ever had. He rather discouraged my eagerness to plunge into Kant and Hegel. But he would promise me, as a reward for undertaking Schiller, that I should enjoy the Nibelungen Lied—which

I have since done, though I prefer the Icelandic original, the Völsungs' Lay—and it pleased him greatly when I ranged about in the dialects of the Fatherland. He was a fervent Catholic of Austrian sympathies, and an intimate personal friend of the late Archduke Stephen, who wrote to him constantly. He saw a good deal at Frankfort, in early years, of Count Bismarck, whom, not to put a fine point on it, he detested. Were all, or most, of his nation like the Rhinelander Karl Kemen, I should not now be writing this book. God rest my dear friend's soul!

I required no spur to adventure myself in German literature, German mythology; but perhaps it may be worth while to record that I drew none of my enthusiasm from Carlyle, whom I did not study or take to until I had gone through thousands of pages in the authors that inspired him. The Germany thus made known to me I shall love and cherish until my dying day. It is an immense possession.

"Mein Vermächtniss, wie herrlich weit und breit!"

It is a land of hills and rivers and fine old cities. I may not hope ever to set eyes again upon the pleasant streams and bluffs of Rhine and Moselle, or the Main and the Neckar

and the Inn, with so many flourishing dales between. But I carry with me in remembrance, sometimes I dream about, Cologne and Strasburg, Heidelberg and Nürnberg, often under a high-sailing moon. And who that has looked ever at Rolandseck and the Seven Mountains from the west at eventide but must feel melancholy when he thinks that he shall never spend such an hour again? This new "Hermannschlacht" has buried on the battlefield my legend-haunted Germany of music, romance, meditation, travel. Bismarck's legacy of statecraft, blood and iron, has made an end of all that.

Well, therefore, do I know the memories that should furnish forth a Trauerrede, or funeral oration, over the corpse of the Germany which is no more, and which at first was haunted, then murdered, by an evil demon fulfilling perfectly Aristotle's account of "injustice in arms," and of the power which abuses prudence and valour, as "the most wicked, the most cruel, the most lustful, and most gluttonous being imaginable." How accurate a description of modern Prussia these words yield is clear from the evidence, day by day steadily growing, of what went before the war and what has happened since. Nothing

like it, so far as my reading extends, can be quoted from history, though Assyrians, Huns, and Mongols might have made to the Prussian war-system a gift of certain devilish ingredients for its cauldron. The final mixture, the quintessence forced upon a shuddering world, is, however, as unexampled as envenomed.

When we say that civilisation is at stake we utter less than the truth. For something still more near to our hearts than the outward frame and order of society is in peril. Prussia, with malice aforethought, has made war on Humanity. Let not any one suppose that I, a man advanced in years, a priest and a student living far away from centres of political strife, desire to indulge in the language of Thersites. Had the story, tested and proved, of the German occupation of Belgium and France been other than it is, would not my judgment have also been different? We know in this country, and we bear witness among ourselves, that this nation at large did not imagine such portents of deliberate cruelty to be possible in the forward march of European armies, until they came to pass. They bewilder our thought as much as they appal our feeling. They put a new face upon war between Western

peoples. But I am thus led to inquire in what sense the Prussians can be considered Western.

Historically, they never formed part of the Roman Empire. As we saw in my first chapter, the permanent division made in 364 by Valentinian between West and East bound up Illyricum, Italy, the Gauls, Spain, and Britain into a single confederacy, with its Latin type of culture and its one religion, of which the capital was Rome. I call this the Western world. And to it the Prussians did not belong at any time. Their significance for us lies in the opposition which now, after ages of dissent from its ideals, has burst out from them in a war for its destruction.

I stand here at the height of my view, gazing down on Roman and Teuton—but a Prussianised Teuton—locked in deadly combat.

Heine, that arrogant young Jew of genius, after once calling upon the British governor of Heligoland—we had not yet made a present of it to our enemy—drew from that single specimen a formula, and defined John Bull as the "man-machine." There was never perhaps a stroke of satire that more widely missed its mark. Consider a moment what

we understand by a machine. It has neither soul nor ideas nor feeling; all its parts are made by a power not itself; it moves only as it is driven; it obeys thought put into its working but has none of its own; and when it is hurt it cannot repair the damage, or only by another piece of equally mindless machinery. Heine saw that English inventors were constantly making machines; therefore, he argued, they must be machines themselves. The eighteenth century, which grew acquainted with the modern Englishman as never before, and which laid stress on the "argument from design," knew better. It recognised in him an originality of thought, a resolution in going his own way, and a self-control under circumstances where others would be lost, such as to set him in a class the very contrary of the mechanical, and, as we now say, the standardised. Attentive readers will have already grasped the reason why this blunder of Heine's must be flung into the dust-heap of exploded fallacies. I am going to retort on him, and I shall not blunder, they may take my word for it.

This lively Jew ought to have looked nearer home, if he was searching for Lamettrie's "L'Homme-Machine." There is a mixed

race, dwelling along the shores of the Baltic Sea, in Prussia West and East, in Pomerania, in Brandenburg, which entirely fits the definition. "Five hundred miles and more to the east of Brandenburg," says Carlyle, in his characteristic way, "lies a Country then [about 997] as now called Preussen (Prussia Proper), inhabited by Heathens, where also endeavours at conversion [to Christianity] are going on, though without success hitherto." I entirely agree; the description is felicitous. He continues: "In Henry the Fowler's time, and long afterwards, Preussen was a vehemently Heathen country; the natives a miscellany of rough Serbic Wends, Letts, Swedish Goths, or Dryasdust knows not what. . . . Dryasdust knows only that these Preussen were a strong-boned, iracund herdsman and fisher people; highly averse to being interfered with, especially in their religion." Quite so, and they have not altered. But a people more unlike the Germans who had been schooled by the Roman Empire and the Roman Church you would not easily find. The Rhine-dwellers, Suabians, Franconians, even the Saxons along the Elbe, afford another type and a less forbidding nature to our observation.

An English lady residing not many years

ago in Pomerania was told that the tribes which emigrated to Britain had once lived there. She answered that, if it were true, they must have taken away "all the smiles" when they went, for she had not seen one on the face of any of the natives left behind. The fatal defect, a lack of humour, is eminently Prussian, and it implies a sameness in individuals very favourable to despotic rule. The Prussian Spartans, like their archetypes in the Greek world, are of a sullen temper, slow to construe a different mind, as well as implacable when offended. Since the give-and-take of an urbane converse lies beyond them, it irritates their pride; and they become violent on the misunderstanding into which they are constantly falling. Hence they make bad masters. The colonial policy of the Empire is admittedly a failure everywhere. It is neither just nor gentle, therefore it cannot succeed. Often during the war Prussian newspapers have asked wonderingly, "Why have we no friends in the wide world?" Here we may perceive the reason.

These miscellaneous Wends, Swedish Goths, and other East Europeans spread themselves into Brandenburg, and, getting still more mixed, they appear in history as "men of

the Mark," forming a population which was never true German, waiting until Teutonic knights and Hohenzollern bailiffs out of Suabia should beat them into human-Christian shape. It is always to be noted that the Hohenzollerns were not themselves, any more than they are now, of the Prussian stock. This fact is essential to their story and to us. The Royal family of Prussia was, and is, German. Hence it served as a chemical reagent to unite elements very unlike and otherwise irreconcilable. That function it has performed again and again, so that we behold the Catholic peoples of the Rhine brought into one huge confederacy with Protestants of Stettin and Königsberg, utterly different from them in race and religion.

Now let us dwell for a moment on this highly significant duty assigned to the erstwhile "Burgraves of Nürnberg in Frankenland." Carlyle says that they were "a thrifty, stedfast, diligent, clear-sighted, stout-hearted line of men," and "always of a growing, gaining nature." Their first office at Nürnberg, granted by Frederick Barbarossa towards 1170, involved, he tells us, "a talent for governing as well as for judging; talent for fighting also, in cases of extremity, and what is still better,

a talent for avoiding to fight." We will take this to be a true description of the Hohenzollerns at their best. What follows?

Surely this, that it was their business under Providence to bring to the fierce heathen and non-Roman tribes over whom, by fighting or by purchase, they in due time acquired lordship the blessings of religion and civilisation. Civilisation from the Greco-Roman world, which had stretched itself long ages back as far as Rhine and Danube; and religion from the Hebrew-Roman tradition, of which the Papacy was the head and front. By the standard, then, of a double inheritance, always reckoned in this "objective," historical, and Western fashion, which is no less real than intelligible, we will measure the achievements of the House of Nürnberg, advancing itself and winning its way by cash down in the years 1412-17, and at the Council of Constance, into the Electorate of Brandenburg, which it bought from the Emperor Sigismund. Into "the grand tide of European events," the line of Hohenzollern enters at this point with Frederick the Statthalter.

It goes back, we saw, to 1170, when Henry II of England was acquiring the disastrous lordship of Ireland, which has been the one con-

spicuous, if not irretrievable, failure of the English "talent for governing as well as for judging." Its entry on a wider stage is timed at the hour of Constance, where nations paraded as churches, though not yet broken off from Catholic unity. It registers all its "growing and gaining," so far as the year 1701, by forcing its way in among crowned royalties, and taking the name of Prussia to cover its conquests—this within a dozen years after the English "glorious Revolution," which decided that Britain should be a royal democracy, not a royal absolutism.

The rest of the story is sketched and summed up in Frederick II, "commonly called the Great"; and his successors count only in the degree by which they have carried out his plans, attempting to do with and for Europe that which he had done with and for Prussia. In detail most of the chronicle is deplorably dull, not offering scenes on which the picturesque narrator could show skill or be pathetic and arresting. Carlyle himself, who endured boredom (*Langeweile*) in research as if he were a professor at Göttingen, calls Frederick's history, told by the Prussian Dryasdust, "a wise-spread, inorganic, trackless matter; dismal to your mind,

and barren as a continent of Brandenburg sand." Imagine what sand of the Sahara must the story be of other Hohenzollern princes, who had inherited merely the eccentricities or the obstinacy of their ancestors! Happily, the object I pursue can be secured without crossing the desert. We may skirt it where it borders on civilisation. In plainer words, my concern is with Prussia's designs on the West, or again on the South-East; with Pan-Germanism and its implied hegemony over Europe. On the one side, Church and Civilisation; on the other, Kaiser and Kultur.

"Kultur," by dint of repetition since 1914, has grown to be mere slang, and what it means, or whether it ever had a meaning, cannot be determined without some effort. It has a meaning, nevertheless; it fixes a certain ideal as the scope of endeavour among modern Germans; it puts into this War a soul of evil—that very demon which, I say, first haunted, and now has done to moral death, the Deutschland of our young enthusiasm. After no small searching in confused and always arrogant statements by the Germans themselves, who praise their Kultur as the latest and best of gospels, to be spread

wherever they march and conquer, I believe it is possible to draw the line which separates us from them in social philosophy. We are always to bear in mind that the War is a war of ideas; hence it derives for us the grandeur, nay, the holiness of a crusade; while in generations to come it will be celebrated, we must hope and do our utmost to ensure, as the War of Liberation. I have in few strokes done what I deemed so far requisite by way of showing the political issues in question, though more is to be added. Above these, however, rises a loftier region, within which the sources lie hid from which political differences spring. Let us go up thither.

Three words need now to be distinguished —Civilisation, "Bildung," and "Kultur." They are not equivalents, though frequently so treated, with necessary darkness ensuing. All are of late origin. Civilisation, which might be termed the subject-matter of Aristotle's *Politics,* is the right manner of men living together so as to attain the most desirable human life. Its virtues, on the received Greek system, are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. It rests, therefore, on a moral foundation; it demands in citizens intelligence and valour; it uses physical force

when reason alone will not avail; and it submits willingly to a higher order of truths and energies, such as the Christian religion, when satisfied of those claims. Civilisation is chiefly mental, fashioning the character not by custom only, or by fear, but from within by the light of thought, and the harmony of a city thus constituted Plato compares to a mighty song. It is the song of Law and Freedom combining "in a pure concent," and in "perfect diapason." A prevailing amenity of manners, refinement of living, high tone without insolence, simplicity and yet the cultivation of the arts which we term liberal, with examples to persuade rather than to strike terror—these are some of the tokens by which we know when a State is civilised.

I ought now to recite for my own pleasure a few, at least, of the sentences in which Pericles has praised "Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts," and model to us, especially under the British flag, of civilisation altogether human, though not developed twenty-three centuries ago to the point that we have reached. There will, however, be a more fitting occasion when I come to the heroic "matter of Britain," as illustrated in this present struggle. I pass from the word

Civilisation, with its backward glances towards "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome," and I take up for examination the word "Bildung."

It was coined by a master, by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, who has stamped on its face his own image and likeness, while the reverse shows sovereign Zeus and his eagle at his side. The thunderbolt, I fancy, is wanting. To speak without metaphor, "Bildung" corresponds closely to the word "Culture," as most of us, taught by Matthew Arnold, would apply it. "Bildung," then, is the liberal education formerly given at our universities, but continued by the man himself in after-life, and combining literature, art, and science, according to individual capacity, so that the result shall be a nature lifted to the heights of "personality," self-poised, enlightened, realised to the full. Goethe's vow is thrice famous: "Im Ganzen, Guten, Schönen, resolut zu leben"—"to live stedfastly in the idea of the Whole, the Good, and the Fair." If we define Civilisation as reason ordering the relations of men to one another in society, we may define "Bildung" as reason ordering the relations of the individual to itself; in other words, to the intelligent plan disclosed in the universe.

When its inspiration is supremely successful, the philosopher comes forth, "a spectator of all time and all existence." Plato, Spinoza, Goethe himself, Emerson, exhibit under their several aspects this true notion of Culture.

When I missed on Goethe's "golden rondure" the thunderbolt of Zeus, I meant it not as rebuke but distinction. Culture is light, not force. Ideas have power in their quality of reason; but "why and wherefore" differ from "shall and will." "Pacem summa tenent," "peace reigns on the heights," sang our sad philosopher-poet, Lucretius. And Goethe himself, and Emerson afterwards, have noted that the intellect is not swayed by interest. Its kingdom is not of this world in any Baconian sense that "knowledge is power." The contemplative man desires no power. He dwells in that land very far off where power cannot come. Hence it was that the great—deservedly great—German thinkers and poets of the eighteenth century were cosmopolite, or would have welcomed with Immanuel Kant a system of perpetual peace.

Let it not be said, by the way, that, Kant being a Prussian, my description of that unsmiling people is refuted. Kant was of Scottish descent and showed it by his

power of thought, by his caution even in the boldest enterprise undertaken by mortal man, in his dry and sly humour, and his practical reason. However, this shall be a digression. To return. The Germans, from 1750 onwards, who created a revolution in thought, were all partisans of the pure idea. Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Goethe, and the youthful Fichte, had as little conception of "Deutschland, mein Vaterland," as Frederick the Great, whose main ambition was to be a bad French poet. For all these, Germany did not exist as a country *"in rerum natura."* The unique Jean Paul, least French of all men created, proves by the absurd mixture in his name (a magpie mixture), that he, dwelling at Hof in Voigtland, would not have flown out angrily had the rare tourist mistaken him for a French subject. That is quite as wonderful as Carlyle's endless preoccupation with Voltaire. But it is demonstration plain that the German of a hundred and twenty years ago was not a patriot and had no country, as we now interpret this challenging word.

Mind you, reader of another age and taste, I love Jean Paul Richter; perhaps I am the sole possessor in this Shakespearian neighbourhood of his whole works. He is German

to the core, not Prussian at all. Who could dream of so gentle a soul delighting to burn down churches, to trample in the mud the poor peasant's hut, and to inoculate his little children with germs of consumption? Horror unspeakable! Jean Paul was heavy, lumpish, naïve, infantine, like the genuine old Schwab; but when the spirit caught him by the hair he flew through mid-heaven. His pathos, humour, quaintness, wisdom, melted then into a sunset glow, rich with dying hues of the eventide, behind them a crystalline depth, tranquil as eternity. This was the man who seemed to make even Goethe's culture a thing of artifice, and to transcend it by pure emotion like a seraph burning in God's love to unsullied flame. How much more was this than the liberal arts could give! But enough has been said to show what "Bildung" meant for the choicest German singers and sagamen in days unhappily gone.

What, then, and at last, is Kultur? It is not civilisation in the acknowledged Western sense. It is most unlike "Bildung," as Goethe conceived that magnificent Greek idea of the man his own intellectual centre, asking, "How does the world seem to me? How am I akin to it?" Kultur is the idea of mechanism

made perfect. Pardon me, I am astonished at the accuracy of my own definition, which no living Prussian—not even Maximilian Harden, who is a Jew—has had the wit to light upon. Yet, how obvious when stated! The pattern of Prussia (we registered that truth some pages back) is Sparta. It is the War-State of Europe, precisely as Sparta was the War-State of Hellas. Blood and iron sum them both up. Sparta had, indeed, physical beauty, which in the Prussian is often replaced by a gigantic stature and those unmeaning blue eyes which Tacitus called "truces et cæruleos," where a fierce or cunning glitter may change the otherwise settled dulness. But the Lycurgan uniformity is unmistakable. Kultur, with such a race, cannot but signify brute strength, bending science and all mental powers to a military obedience, commanding, forbidding, intermeddling; as if to police the whole world were the sum of political wisdom.

"How long a time lies in one little word!" Between "police" and "policy" there is a whole period of development in social ideas; but the Prussian lags behind. He has not a suspicion of the march that with infinite toil the race of man has accomplished, feet bleeding, tongue parched, but temper indomi-

table, from serfdom to freedom. And herein becomes manifest the deadly sin of these Hohenzollerns. They scorned to learn from the English, who had brought their king to trial and execution. But could they not be taught by Lessing and Goethe the rudimentary lesson that mind is the creative, because the most original, of human powers; and that in this way without physical force it will, sooner or later, control every force? No, they went, they are going, the clean contrary way. Their Kultur is not "force guided by intelligence," but "intelligence submitting itself to force"; it is Sparta magnified to the dimensions of a vast empire. And, like Sparta, it is doomed by the law working within it to fall.

"Sparta," said Robespierre, haranguing the Convention which he executed in batches, "Sparta is a flash of lightning through the darkness of antiquity." His faith went to an absolute system, a people under constrained vows, an ideal that shaped with an axe and reigned by the sword's edge. He justified the Lacedæmonian rigour because it turned out citizens on a mould, all alike, none apart. The thought of Lycurgus, it would appear, was military by design, contemplating the

State as an engine of war which required from its men and women not any skill in the liberal arts, nor eloquence, nor self-culture for its own sake, but the narrow, severe, utterly detached temperament of submission, not to be moved by pity or love. The State was their father and mother, its command their sufficient warrant for cruel deeds done in cold blood and exactions driving the conquered cities they held to despair. Hence Euripides called them the most hated of all nations. It is a passage so apt to my reasoning that I will venture on a rude paraphrase: the suffering Andromache cries out, in her affliction, against Spartan Menelaus—

"O mortals most hate-worthy unto men,
Dwellers at Sparta, crooked in your designs,
Ye kings of lies, mechanics of all ill,
Twisting and turning, nought in you is sound,
Nor in your thoughts; by wrong ye thrive in Greece."

An English commentator remarks of Euripides that "he seemed to have disliked them [the Spartans] just for those vices which to every virtuous man are peculiarly odious; because they were deceitful, treacherous, fond of gain, lax in their public morals, unscrupulous in their political relations." But once more it is needful to insist on the specific difference

between vices indulged through frailty or sudden passion, and what I may set down as the heresy of justifying crime by reasons of State. And if the entire policy of government is carried forward on such principles, what shall we say? I reply that any government so doing is profoundly inhuman. "Force should be right," then, and this inversion gives us the doctrine of "Kultur," in Berlin as in Lacedæmon.

Since I first thought of this little book, it has come upon me ever more strongly that in front of the Prussian trenches we are attacking stands Thomas Carlyle. Modern Prussia with its General Staff, its nation under arms, its bureaucracy, its Kaiser, is only Frederick the Great multiplied into departments, or centred and reincarnate in his successor. But to Carlyle, though not without misgivings, Frederick was "the Hero as King." And by the "Hero" we are bidden to understand something like a divine apparition. In three pages and a half of hard swearing (*Frederick,* i. 143-6), our venerable Sage of Chelsea denounces, calling it "a doctrine of devils," the opinion widely held by onlookers including Voltaire, that the Hohenzollerns, and Frederick in particular,

made their ascent to high fortune "in the way of adroit Machiavellism." He, the not yet extinct volcano, breaks out in fire and flame over a book of uncertain authorship, *Les Matinées du Roi de Prusse,* which has the audacity to put upon Frederick himself the confession of these diabolical principles. Well, I am not concerned just now with any nameless author; and Frederick's yea or nay would leave the matter exactly where he found it. The work in question, I must add, is said to be extant in Frederick's own writing; it was used by Von Treitschke for his biography of the king; and its profanity, wit, and shrewdness might well bear the royal sign-manual.

Carlyle, volcanically but not greatly to our enlightenment, is eager to persuade us that "adroit Machiavellism" never prospers in God's world; but Prussia has prospered; therefore Prussia took no lessons from Machiavel. To this doubtless well-meant reasoning the answer of historians, who need not be "godless dullards," is "let us go by facts." Let us in other chapters, I say, follow "Kultur" swiftly down the centuries to our own time, from Frederick the Great to William II.

CHAPTER IV

The Royal Caste and Realism in Politics

IN writing the *Life of Frederick the Great,* Carlyle used or consulted some two thousand books, great and small. If much reading gave soundness of judgment, and industry without a parallel brought light corresponding, this should be the truest biography in print since printing was. And yet the reverse, in most essential points, nay in the moral effect as a whole, is what came of toil so prodigious. The veteran of Cheyne Row did not explain to Europe the phenomenon we call Prussia; neither will his summing up of Frederick as a man or a king bear the criticism of simple good sense. It is a melancholy reflection. For had the genius of the writer "blazed up" round his subject with an illumination of right principle, instead of the flame and smoke due to perverse theory, England might have been warned in time of the danger that now threatens her existence. Dr Sarolea calls the *Life of*

Frederick mischievous. It is too little to say. Carlyle's last enterprise was a national disaster.

I remember a shrewd critic of books, the late Mr. Trübner, observing to me, "What has Carlyle added to our knowledge of the times of Frederick the Great except his own humours and eccentricities?" One of our Ambassadors at Berlin—best known as Lord Odo Russell—would have replied, "Well, he has written the wittiest book in the world." And who could have done for us battle-pieces so precise yet so humanly alive, as if some mental smokeless powder had taken the place of Horace Vernet's circus-like performances on canvas at Versailles? No, I will not echo Mr. Trübner's hard saying. This, however, remains to be noted, that Carlyle, so far as I am aware, did not attempt to meet the definite charges of perfidy brought against his hero—a perfidy made the chief hinge of policy (*Weltpolitik*) over and over again by Frederick. He is content, if one may judge by his silence, that this king's murderous ambition should have set the world on fire.

Macaulay, who represents the average Englishman's moral sense, has, in a passage to my mind unanswerable, summed up the ethics of the first Silesian war: "The whole

world sprang to arms. On the head of Frederick is all the blood which was shed in a war which raged during many years and in every quarter of the globe, the blood of the column of Fontenoy, the blood of the mountaineers who were slaughtered at Culloden. The evils produced by his wickedness were felt in lands where the name of Prussia was unknown; and in order that he might rob a neighbour whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the Great Lakes of North America."

To all that is said in these convincing words a dread parallel offers itself now full in our sight. For Frederick read William, and the resemblance in act as in diplomacy starts up complete. Neither is it a chance coincidence. Few Englishmen, and I suppose hardly any Englishwomen, could pass an examination in the merest outlines of that world-war which centred from 1740 to 1763 about the Austrian Succession. They know even less of the "Great Elector" Frederick William, whose adroit and unprincipled turning from one side to the other a century before that war made Brandenburg "a great country, or already on the way towards greatness." Carlyle says euphe-

mistically (an odd thing to have to say about Carlyle) that "Friedrich Wilhelm's aim, in this as in other emergencies, was sun-clear to himself, but for the most part dim to everybody else. He had to walk very warily . . . he had to wear semblances, to be ready with evasive words, and advance noiselessly by many circuits."

And thereby at the Peace of Westphalia he gained one half of Pomerania, together with what statesmen have agreed to call the "secularised"—but they were quite plainly the "stolen"—bishoprics of Magdeburg, Halberstadt, and Minden. In 1656 he fought in the battle of Warsaw against John Casimir, King of Poland, then went over to his side, being a man, says Carlyle once more, advancing in circuits, or "spirally, face now to east, now to west, with his own reasonable private aim sun-clear to him all the while." At any rate, he contrived by such spiral movements to get rid of the homage due, as we saw in our first chapter, from Prussia to the Polish crown. At the Peace of Oliva, May 1660, Ducal Prussia began thus crookedly its upward march to greatness. The shifty Elector could not keep, though he won by fighting, Swedish Pomerania. Nor was he permitted by Leopold

of Austria to annex the Silesian Duchies, a claim to which he put forward on some private family arrangement made long ago with the Dukes of Liegnitz. And this peculiar demand, based on "Heritage Fraternity," brings me to another cardinal omission in Carlyle's ten big volumes, which goes to the very taproot of our War now raging.

I write out for you here in legible characters, dear British reader, two German words, beautiful to behold, *Mitbelehnung* and *Erbverbrüderung;* the first of which signifies that two parties stand in the relation of holder and heir in reversion, should the original line fall extinct, to a dignity in fief; and the second, not unlike the first, is a covenant of reciprocal succession on failure of either House. These were pacts of old time, but later they were not recognised in law among German princes. Thanks to the first, however, Prussia fell to the line of the Great Elector; and by virtue of the second he laid claim to the Silesian Duchies, thus opening a pretext for the War of 1740, which in due time blossomed, with fruits of death, into the Seven Years War.

The point I am driving at comes now in view. Have you reflected, good, easy Briton, that these "Pacts," "Co-infiefments," "Brothers-

in-Arms-Covenants," were all made without consulting the serfs or subjects thus handed about, shovelled to and fro like so much dead weight, treated in short as stock and fixtures, by the potentates big and little who disposed of them absolutely? This Carlyle describes as "the right to dispose of said Lands" —but he omits the unsaid People who went along with the Lands—"in any manner of way"; and he quotes the legal terms, "by written Testament, or by verbal on their deathbed, they can, as they see wisest, give away, sell, pawn, dispose of, and exchange these said lands to all lengths, and with all manner of freedom."

Reflect what such "freedom" in the high contracting parties will mean for the other parties, not high and without share in the contract that henceforth determines the extent of their "life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness." The lands in question were not private estates but lordships carrying with them more or less of sovereignty, and as a rule human beings were taken into the bargain without chance of appeal from it. Those long rolling words, *Mitbelehnung* and *Erbverbrüderung* mean precisely that the mass of the German Nation were just "property." They belonged to the

reigning House. On such a plea was it that Frederick II claimed Silesia; for such an end he fought or caused to be fought some eighteen pitched battles, laid waste large tracts of the Fatherland, brought unspeakable miseries on his own dominions, and earned the title of "Great."

That government by consent of the governed is the only true conception of a civilised State never, I believe, so much as occurred in his most benevolent moods to a prince or princeling of the genuine German stock. Their political scheme was always tribal. Their subjects were their family, extended to all who dwelt under their rule. Inheritance and exchange, when bare conquest—*Faustrecht*—had done its work, determined who should be master of these serfs; to ask their consent would have seemed not unlike taking the votes of a flock of sheep before choosing their butcher. It is notorious that the German princes sold their troops, Hessians, Saxons, and as we have just seen in the case of the Great Elector, Prussians, to the highest bidder. Subjects must be soldiers and soldiers were food for cannon; but whether they stood in front of these particular guns or behind them depended on the price their owner got for hiring his men out to kill and be killed.

Hence the German military service appears to have been always brutal on the officers' part, cringing and doglike on the part of the rank and file. Unlimited beating was their portion of the family rights. Indignities too revolting for mention in such a book as I am writing, outrages on our common humanity in the persons of these wretched slaves, driven by them not unfrequently to suicide, have marked as with bleeding wounds and livid weals the story of German militarism, from the Thirty Years War down to the campaigns going forward while I pen these lines. It is a record of shame and horror perhaps unexampled in the misery thus inflicted age after age, and with appeal to divine right for its warrant, on men so tamed, so *down,* that they, at extremity, would kill themselves to escape more anguish, but never dream of bringing their tormentor to account with a rifle. Such training in moral cowardice, the very heart of Prussian Kultur, has been the most powerful instrument—we know it now —ever forged against the world's welfare. It beats out of its unhappy victim all conscience except the word of command.

Yet a Briton like our really "pitiful-hearted Titan" Carlyle was bewitched by the strong man armed, and has no word of compassion

for his victims, though ever so much better informed than Thackeray or Macaulay of the frightful lengths to which that tyranny had gone in the past. We have now to add, from the day when Carlyle ended his vast misleading apology of Frederick II, another fifty-two years to the indictment. Unhappily, Frederick is not, in his biographer's sense, "hitherto the last of the Kings." How much of our present desolation would never have racked our minds and torn civilised life to pieces, had he proved so! But from these facts we can draw conclusions not dependent on *Mornings with the King of Prussia,* nor open to doubt.

Aristotle, we read in our earlier pages, would not allow that a State is merely a family enlarged. And of governments he says, "One is adapted to the nature of freemen, the other to that of slaves." Then he continues, "Domestic government is a monarchy, for that is what prevails in every house; but a political State is a government of free men and equals." The German Lord of War calls his soldiers, "Kinder," "you children," as belonging to his own family; he treats them as slaves. No German State was at any time the government of free men and equals. Heine bade his audience observe that German princes sat on

nearly all the thrones of Europe, and that they fought or conspired everywhere against liberty. Professor Haeckel charges England with guilt as the "destroyer of nations," who has brought on this tremendous "Kultur-tragedy." What can be his drift, unless that the British Constitution, known more and more as enlightenment spreads, provoking other peoples to claim what it offers, is threatening the reign of a "family" —and "herile"—despotism? Haeckel grants by implication that the Prussian-Austrian so-called war of defence is a war of reaction. The two Kaisers may turn out, if worsted in battle, to be the last of the Carlylean kings; their government, "adapted to the nature of slaves," may become an extinct form of political evolution. It is high time indeed. But men of science, if Germans, are preparing to mourn its decease.

Have you not reflected sometimes, my good reader—I have, often—on the wide waste of human life and treasure caused by Wars of the Roses, Wars of the Spanish and Austrian Succession, Wars of Don Carlos and Donna Isabella—all for what? To decide which family, or which one of a family, should rule the passive people. That under a Republican form of government these apparently insane

contests are made impossible is, of course, obvious; but much more should be registered to its credit. The temper out of which they sprang, with its blind attachment to persons rather than principles, its disdain of the common good, its hatred of law and infatuated Legitimism, carries us back to the Tribe at odds with itself or, as we now say, in a condition of disintegrated personality.

I grant, on the other side, that Wars of the Roses may be real struggles of parts not yet thoroughly fused, of Celt and Saxon, for instance; or again, of conflicting ideas, as between the old and the new régime in Spain. But these problems are aggravated and seldom rightly solved, when thrown into the shape of dynastic disputes. The Tudors could not have ruled absolutely, nor have made the English change their religion, perhaps, at all; in any case, it would not have been a sordid chapter in the Divorce Court; unless the great houses had been almost extinguished during the quarrel of the White and Red Roses.

Consider again what wars have arisen out of royal marriages and the claims following them. We have often heard the Latin tag approved, "Tu, felix Austria, nube." Austria was to win many titles and millions of subjects by

repeated wedlock. This name, however, did not signify the Austrian people but the House of Habsburg. It was a question of Archdukes and Archduchesses; the chattels, persons, and communities affected were the dowry that went with settlements. I possess a rare and splendid edition of Lucian's works, published at Amsterdam by Wetstein in 1743, which was dedicated to Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary, but not yet Roman Empress. Her titles of honour and dominion, I find on counting them, show the young lady to have been in that year of comparative humility five times a Queen, fifteen times a Duchess, twice a Princess, five times a Marchioness, five times a Countess, four times a Lady, once over certain salt mines —all in her own right; and by marriage, twice a Duchess and once a Grand Duchess; in all, thirty-nine articles or items of rank and style.

Maria Theresa was thus expected to make laws for a confused medley of nations from the Slavonic March to Flanders, and from the Adriatic to the North Sea, or if not to make yet to sign them. But every piece on the huge chessboard was movable at the discretion of a Minister at Vienna such as her Prince von Kaunitz, to whom the people were

pawns and the territories farms bringing in revenues for his various wars, prompted by reasons of State—in plain terms by intrigue and personal aims.

History is made up of dynastic rivalries, into which the welfare of the nations hacked and hewn to support them did not directly enter, while it was sacrificed on the altar of secret diplomacy. These Austrian marriages created not so much an empire (and never have they brought forth United States), but rather a menagerie of discordant peoples struggling to be free of one another. Czechs and Germans; Hungarians and Croatians; Slovenes, Italians, Ruthenes,—what under the rule of Habsburg until this day were they all but oppressors or oppressed? The crown, Imperial or Apostolic, proved itself to be no principle of cohesion; at best, it was a golden chain. Austria deserves the Homeric epithet, "man-devouring"; it consumed races but neither civilised nor attached them. Royal German marriages, producing a royal caste, or at any rate, as rude journalism lately cries, a trade union of crowned heads, have become a peril to Europe. We all know it; a few dare to say it; and reticence now means nothing but polite seeming.

So then: "Tu, felix Austria, nube," may be taken down from its pride of place and flung by the herald into that gloomy vault of the Capuchins where the Habsburgs lie dead in state. Henceforth, we had better speak of the Dowager Lady Austria, to whom the Allies may vote an ample widow's jointure with becoming weeds. A semi-divine caste, riddled as are so many Royal Houses by the penalties which follow upon consanguineous unions, has been sentenced at the judgment-seat of common sense, of history, and of this very war. Moreover, Washington, if not Paris, long has been showing a more excellent way. Not as though we need hold Republican views in the abstract because we have come so far from the strange illusions of Jacobite and Legitimist. In the spirit of Burke himself, who lamented the age of chivalry, but who looked on politics and government as a practical affair, we should esteem royalty in a given case by the benefits it has conferred on its subjects, or by the hindrance to freedom and progress entailed in keeping it up. The only Divine Right of Kings, as of superiors generally, is the right to serve those well over whom they are set. To serve thus is to reign; that is the whole mystery of kingship.

But the Royal Caste, thanks to its idols and idolators, has been brought up in the belief that it exists for itself, is what logicians call *"bonum in se"*; intrinsically good and necessary to European civilisation. These are superstitions. Wantonly to oust a family from the throne, on which it represents the historical permanence of a nation, would be as great a fault as to hold it canonised there in spite of its vices, errors, and effective disloyalty to the Commonwealth. The Romanoffs, even since I began my present volume, have been weighed and found wanting. The Habsburgs it was, and not their many nations, who plunged Europe into this frightful adventure, knowing how little they owed to Prussia which was egging them on, and surely less discerning even than of old if they imagined that Berlin would let them keep the chief spoils of battle.

And what shall we say of the Hohenzollerns themselves? They, indeed, won by wedlock and family ties, by *Mitbelehnung* or *Erbverbrüderung,* claims to expansion which the Great Elector and the Great Frederick might enforce at the sword's point. Had they been in quest of a motto corresponding pretty nearly with Austria's in weight and metre, this perhaps would have served: "Tu, ferox

Prussia, caede," or "Savage Prussia, strike hard." That they did strike hard and get their booty, a remarkable passage from the now rare volume, *Letters Concerning the Present State of Poland,* published in London, 1773, will sufficiently illustrate. Elsewhere I have described this quotation as "a retrospect and a prophecy." Let the reader judge. The author was, it appears, a Rev. Mr. Lindsey, tutor to the nephew of King Stanislaus Poniatowski, and he wrote on the morrow of the First Partition. In Letter IV, p. 80, these very significant words may be found—

"If you consider with attention the conduct of the House of Brandenburgh from the time of the Margrave Albert to this hour, by what various pretences it has augmented its domains: first, a feudal duchy torn from Poland; then that duchy erected into an independent sovereignty; then new territories added to it; on another side, the duchy of Cleves, the counties of Marck and Ravensberg, the bishoprics of Minden and Camin, together with the eastern parts of Pomerania, acquired by the Treaty of Westphalia; the better half of Swedish Pomerania acquired afterwards; the seizure of Silesia by the present King (Frederick II); the duchy of Prussia erected

into a kingdom; that kingdom now more than doubled; almost all the rivers which empty into the Baltic secured to him;—you must allow that this house has pursued a plan of aggrandisement with a perseverance and success that ought to engage the attention of every State in Europe."

So much, certainly, you must allow; and more also. For if Austria looks like a "ramshackle Empire" in the Liberal eyes of Mr. Lloyd George, it is certain that Prussia —the machine-made and otherwise loose-jointed confederacy stretching from the Niemen to the Rhine—is a State hammered and welded into an Army The mad father of Frederick the Great constructed this war-machine; Frederick set it in motion, and under him it ground its enemies to powder on the right hand and the left. Two battles won in thirty days; Rossbach over the French, on November 5, 1757, and Leuthen over the Austrians a month later, on December 5 of the same year, proclaimed to East and West that Prussia had become a Great Power. At Zorndorf, August 26—September 2, 1758, the Russians were taught by a fearful expenditure of life and the agony of defeat a lesson as convincing.

These three combats on different fronts and all victorious may be said to have fixed in bronze the Prussian idea of war, and with it of the State. It did not resemble the French, for France had a long and triumphant record of glories other than military. It was most unlike the British, at that time more than ever opposed to standing armies, and favouring private adventure as the simplest way to win empires. The idea of Kultur as mechanism made perfect found itself, so to speak, on those bloodstained fields where the finest armies of Europe went down before its onset. Henceforth Hohenzollern was the War-Lord. The dynasty ruled the machine; and the machine upheld the dynasty. That is what William II has thundered out in his proclamations; he is the sword of the Lord, and his law is God's law. "If any man resists me," said this new Tamburlaine, "him I will smash." A brief Evangel!

And thus we perceive what comes of mistakng the State for a family, against Aristotle and reason. It did away with all hope of seeing Prussia first, and Germany afterwards, develop into the "government of free men and equals." For since this "family" had, by Divine Right, a ruler who was responsible to God alone, its

one duty was obedience. And as the Prussian dominions lay geographically open to attack on all sides, every war which the King resolved to wage might be called a war of self-defence. And this wide-scattered realm could be defended only by a trained army, always on the alert. There was no way more direct to raise such an army than to make every youth a potential soldier, to discipline the whole nation by the sabre and the cane, to revive Sparta in modern form, and to consider peace and war as episodes in a general policy which aimed at aggression and meditated conquest. "Tu, ferox Prussia, caede."

Frederick's policy, then, which has been that of his House, cannot be absolved (to please Carlyle) from the charge of Machiavellism. And this for the plain reason that Machiavel reduces politics or statecraft to a pure scheme of forces without ethics, which forces consist of violence and cunning. Carlyle himself argued, "What is a Right that cannot translate itself into a Might?" The exceedingly immoral deduction that "Might is Right" lay close at hand. But Frederick, let it be owned, did not trouble himself in any enterprise, from the rape of Silesia to the dismembering of Poland, about abstract Right or Wrong. He

played with statements of "rights" in a diplomatic sense; he could finesse and dictate notes for the bewigged lawyers of the Aulic Council; his real argument was delivered with amazing accuracy from the cannon's mouth. As Frederick, so Bismarck; as either or both, Kaiser Wilhelm the Faithful. He is, indeed, "der Treue," true to type, loyal to his family tradition.

We, who have grown up on a system of freedom, private and public, where no privileges by divine appointment hinder the course of law and justice, but all say their say, and the nation's verdict is final in matters of State, cannot even by severe exertion imagine a Superman—I fear the hybrid term must be allowed—whose personal caprices, which he is pleased to label heavenly decisions, shall have the force of law. Yet such a Superman the Kaiser sees when he looks at himself in the glass. It is bad philosophy and history out of date; it is the mental condition well known to certain doctors as *la folie des grandeurs;* it was the disease of the Caligulas and the Neros; an excited, feverish possession of a brain not other than abnormal by an idea, fixed and ever-pressing on it—which reduces all other men to puppets, and sends millions

to suffering and death as in a day-dream, touched by no motive except colossal and homicidal vanity.

Frederick the Great died in 1786, three years before the French began their Revolution. He had no suspicion of the storm which was coming up from the West. Neither he nor any one in Europe dreamt of a pale student—Corsican by birth and Italian, or even Florentine, by cast of intellect, then seventeen years old—who would eclipse his fame and drown it in oblivion by victories far more widely trumpeted than Rossbach or Leuthen. The modern German, however, brings these two soldier-chiefs together and bows down before them both.

In moments of exaltation Kaiser Wilhelm fancies that he is the Great Frederick, whose portrait he keeps ever at hand, come again in mind and feature. Napoleon has been seriously claimed by others than Herr H. S. Chamberlain as a Teuton of almost pure breed, on the evidence of his fair hair and blue-grey eyes. To the Berlin Valhalla he must belong, since he bodies forth the unmixed power of intellect, obedient to a will that knew no bounds, which made him conqueror of the West. Neither Jena with its ignominy

nor Waterloo, which the Kaiser has resolved into a purely Prussian triumph, can check this idolatrous deification of a hero to whom Deutschland was a country made to be plundered, and its sons a horde of indifferent fighting men.

But the sum of these things is Machiavelli's "little masterpiece," *The Prince*. Carlyle thought enough and too much had been made of it, as though his entire biography of Frederick were not, so to speak, its last illustrated edition. Cæsar Borgia, "der alte Fritz," Napoleon, may well adorn its gallery of portraits. The Florentine secretary drew his maxims from life; and these later slayers of men prove them once more to be available, —up to a certain point. The State, on that showing, has no ethics save its own advantage. It is not lawless, for the Prince is its law. In current scientific language, though going back to our English philosopher Hobbes, there is no power, no principle, no interest which is entitled to challenge the supremacy, or can escape the jurisdiction, of the civil order, incarnate now in an Emperor of the French and now in a German Kaiser.

CHAPTER V

From Napoleon to Bismarck

WE seem to be witnessing the attempted suicide of Europe. After ages will refuse credence to the things which have long been filling our daily news with monstrous tales of destruction, laying waste Belgium, northern France, Serbia, Rumania; while Italy, our treasure-house, trembles at a possible descent upon its fair cities by barbarians from the Stelvio Pass, and Poland is a desert soaked in blood, desolate under famine. Whose mind was it that projected outwards and executed these designs which even to contemplate shake us with preternatural fear? How did we tumble headlong into chaos? But yesterday and Britons were amusing themselves over trivialities, or quarrelling about suffrages, or thrown out of gear by strikes on railways, in coal mines, wherever the men chose. Now we have heard ourselves called, not without motive, a beleaguered city; the

nation is an army or a military forge; the navy stands between us and ruin.

But in a time which will be ever memorable by reason of its peculiar calamity, when civilisation, like Shakespeare's "universal wolf," was trying to "eat up itself," we have one comfort. This is, in my view, the fifth act of a world-tragedy, where many knots will be untied. Name the problem "Democracy" or "Feudalism," or yet more boldly, "Religion," there lies the question put by Fate; and it is for us to create, not merely to find out, the answer, as in our own lives we must do the like or die. And the answer is already showing, because out of an immense confusion the final issues have emerged, and are more obvious to sight and touch than they have ever been before. From Frederick through Napoleon to Washington—these are the signs on the high-road of history. Beyond them I see the hills of God.

It is a curious reflection; these three men lived at the same time, overlapping one another, of course, but leading in the period which, until August 1914, we thought our own. Let us recall the dates: Frederick, 1712-1786; Napoleon Bonaparte, 1769-1821; and Washington, 1732-1799. Behind the storms

of war these three ride, as Choosers of the Slain. For the world's future as opening now to prophetic eyes, Napoleon mediates between the Prussian King and the American President, though himself last to die; since ideals are seen or dreamt of long before they come to be perfect in time. Europe will be saved by the spirit which breathed in Washington, and I shall have great things to say concerning America. It was, however, Napoleon who broke the old order on this side of the Atlantic, abolished the Holy Roman Empire, and gave Prussia free scope to become the paramount power in Germany.

Napoleon was the "armed soldier of the Revolution"; but a demonic force works by action and reaction all round its starting point; and the man who created a Kingdom of Italy which led up to Italy "One and Indivisible," was the same whose unjust attack on the Venetian Republic, and his old-world bargaining, brought the Austrians to encamp in St. Mark's Place for near upon seventy years. By his repeated blows the settlement of Germany effected at the Peace of 1648 was shattered. His own crazy kingdom of Westphalia, with his Rhenish Confederation, could no more be found after Waterloo. It was Napoleon who enabled

the Prussians to set up their "Watch on the Rhine." For he pursued, whether knowing it or not, the policy of Richelieu towards Austria, despising Brandenburg, which had fallen into a helpless condition after Frederick's time. And he refused obstinately to forbode the consequences should his vast empire not hold together when he was gone.

Summing up, it is not too much to say that Napoleon left as a possible inheritance to some future Hohenzollern a new Germanic Empire, and the hegemony of Europe. By reaction he called into being the Holy Alliance, which was nothing but autocracy masquerading as religion. For he, too, was an autocrat, self-made, but intent on founding a dynasty, like any other fortunate adventurer of his type. He envied Washington's fame; he was not great enough to imitate him. Freedom had little to expect from the Napoleons, as events proved. The idea of Democracy is not equality of servitude. On the whole, Bonaparte with tireless vigour centralised government, simplified methods, mechanised art and literature—all which ends in Prussian Kultur. He left Germany as a house swept and garnished, ready for the spirit more wicked than himself to enter in and dwell there.

Historians of the War of Liberation in 1813 have seen these facts, but in a light too favourable to the Hohenzollerns. The *Tugendbund,* or League of Virtue, the German uprising, with Leipzig and Waterloo victories, appear in Teuton prose and verse like divine wonders wrought by Stein, Scharnhorst and the other statesmen, at the beck and call of their Prussian master, the princes of the Fatherland joining in. I must except Heine. "At their all-high command," says the ironical Jew, "we Germans rose and fought for freedom; always, you know, we do what our sovereigns tell us." To drive out the foreigner was to free Germany from Napoleon and his lieutenants; but of liberty in an English or true democratic sense, not a word!

The Austrian Metternich, also named Mitternacht—"the Prince of Darkness"—reigned from 1815 to 1848. A man of infinite charm, wit, dexterity, without scruples or deep convictions, he, if any one, could have restored the sceptre to the Habsburgs, by which, during well nigh six centuries, they ruled at Frankfort over the wide German lands. But Napoleon had passed by; the resurrection was a dream. While Metternich lasted and a dilettante, Frederick William IV, played fantastic tricks

on the throne of Prussia, no decision of the problems agitating Europe could be hoped for.

Men of my age who believe in the democratic movement, feel as if thirty good years had been wasted before the curtain drew up again which had fallen amid vehement plaudits on the exile at St. Helena. The history of those days will not be rehearsed in the great books of the future, or only as an interregnum. With Napoleon III and Bismarck the drama carries us into a new act—a series of acts, for the play is like a Japanese novel, going on endlessly. Carlyle's "last of the kings" had a successor, not the poor commonplace "William the Great," whom his grandson decorates in vain with titles at which posterity will smile, but Otto von Bismarck, Prussian Premier, destined to be Chancellor of the German Empire. Feudalism had discovered its most powerful representative, and autocracy delivered itself into his hands.

A feudal autocracy sounds like a contradiction in terms. Yet in the Central Empires it is a fact. We may translate its significance for the plan of this book, by defining it as the perpetual alliance of absolute king and hereditary nobles against the rest of the nation. The "high and well-born" unite to govern,

exploit, and keep in their place those who are not "born" at all. It is the "Almanach de Gotha" lording it over finance, professions, industry, agriculture, proletarians, by means of Crown, Court, Law, Army, Navy—and please note the capital letters, which indicate the power that controls whatever is worth having in the kingdom.

I do not pretend to an expert knowledge of Prussian history; but I am unable to put my finger on any episode which would suggest an alliance of king and people to curb the nobles. For my purpose, therefore, Kaiserdom and Junkerdom are all one. Bismarck's motto in his *Reminiscences,* and still more plainly in his acts, was "Ego et Rex meus." He urged the royal person forward with whip and spur; when King William grew restive the statesman threatened to dismount. But neither steed nor rider had the least inclination to turn down the Via Nazionale. Bismarck, himself a Junker, held unswervingly by the *ancien régime;* he was loyal to his order while he drove royalty on.

Thus in a matter of prime importance the new German Empire, when it came to be, differed, greatly to its immediate advantage, from the French Empire, as restored by

Napoleon III. France, we remember, had abolished its feudal noblesse on a night of frantic enthusiasm, August the Fourth, 1789. It was a final act. Not even the courage of Napoleon, though a self-crowned modern Charlemagne, was equal to reviving an institution which democracy regards as its dearest foe. The conqueror of the West might make feudal chiefs outside France of his marshals and ministers; but his attempts at Counts and Barons of the Empire ended in names without power. Hence, when he fell, these fell at the same moment. In like manner, between France and the possible Republic after 1852, there stood but a lonely, somewhat wavering figure; let him be assassinated or taken prisoner and the Imperial phantom would vanish, as in the event it did.

But Prussia, nay Germany at large, resembles the France which existed before Richelieu tamed the Nobles and Louis XIV kept them as lackeys in his Court at Versailles. The feudal system lives on across the Rhine; it adds to the Monarchy strength and resources; it is a permanent General Staff, always in office, let what will happen. How decisively it can intervene to save or to extend its own privileges we have often witnessed, and shall

again before the *dénouement* of this War plot is reached. Here, certainly, is the fiercest of entanglements, much concerning us who never thought to be troubled by Prussian Junkers. The cry goes now, "Eliminate the Hohenzollerns." Not an unjust or unwise policy, and kind above measure to the German people. Nevertheless, we are not adjudicating on Napoleon III after Sedan, a general without an army, a king without nobles, a parvenu without a pedigree. He had no roots and withered away; his dynasty was planted in the sand. When William II prattles about Divine Right he is appealing, in fact, to the history of which he bears the burden and claims the renown. And so these high-flying German birds of prey; they have been long at this game. Of old they made their nest in the cedars; to pull it down would be revolution. Kaiser and Junkers stand or fall together. To eliminate the Hohenzollerns a German "Fourth of August" will be indispensable.

If allegations like the foregoing could be overthrown, who would rejoice more than I that make them? But I fear they are terribly well founded. And the inferences from them are formidable. Were we fighting theory with theory, or institutions with institutions, the

conflict would be hard enough. But the Western nations, including now the United States, have in front of them a War-machine, the most heavily mounted hitherto known, and it is driven by a living force—I do not say an intelligence, but something more primitive—a tradition bred and born in the very nature of the men hurling their strength into battle. Living history so equipped has reserves within it of obstinacy, has fervours and enthusiasms, with old associations to kindle them afresh. The Hohenzollern legend, medieval—modern, will afford to Prussians at bay sentiment as powerful as the Stuart legend did to Jacobite Highlanders. And "old Fritz" may serve—like "le petit caporal" to France—to give Germany an object of personal devotion.

Indeed, since Rossbach this Frenchified Voltairian, though he could not follow a German translation of Racine, has been forcibly taken to fill the part of Arminius, the devourer of Roman legions. But neither Frederick nor any of his successors, not even William II, ever did consider Germany except in the light of a larger domain and fee-farm of Prussia. Never one of them was a true German patriot. In war they have sacrificed Bavarians and Saxons without mercy, while sparing their

Pomeranians. Frederick laid Saxony waste, not less unconcerned at its desolation than William was over the ruin of Belgium, which "made his heart bleed" every hour he was insisting on it. I will quote Macaulay rather than Carlyle to show the character of a Prussian invader.

"This battle (Lobositz) decided the fate of Saxony. Augustus and his favourite Brühl fled to Poland. The whole army of the electorate capitulated. From that time till the end of the war Frederick treated Saxony as a part of his dominions, or rather he acted towards the Saxons in a manner which may serve to illustrate the whole meaning of that tremendous sentence, 'Subjectos tanquam suos, viles tamquam alienos.' Saxony was as much in his power as Brandenburg; and he had no such interest in the welfare of Saxony as he had in the welfare of Brandenburg. He accordingly levied troops and exacted contributions throughout the enslaved province, with far more rigour than in any part of his own dominions. Seventeen thousand men who had been in the camp at Pirna were half compelled, half persuaded to enlist under their conqueror."

Now in the eighteenth century for one

Teuton prince to spoil and waste the lands of another was by no means looked upon as treason to Germany. The Fatherland, split up into family estates beyond counting, had lost whatever sense of unity it ever possessed; and, truly, that was not much. Feudalism divides almost as the clan-system divides, or at any rate hinders the people who should be a single nation from combining into a whole. It was first by the war with Napoleon in 1813, then and far more by emigration, especially to America, and at last by the constraining force of a victorious German Empire, that a certain feeling of the *patria,* the common country, began to be developed. Readers of Auerbach's *Village Stories* will have noted this gradual change, by which a Saxon, Rhinelander, Suabian, or Hessian, found himself first of all to be a German, because the Yankee or the Briton called him so. In Chicago, nay in Milwaukee, "Deutschland über Alles" prevailed. Pressure from Berlin has increased the weight of this Germanism; and we hear of little else during the War, which is described by every organ of publication within the Reich as an assault on the nation.

Nevertheless, a sentiment late and manufactured is not likely to survive the strain of

defeat. Under all circumstances, it remains true that Prussia is not Germany, and conversely, that Germany is not Prussia. In spite of Dohm's aphorism, it is not true that "the interests of Brandenburg and Deutschland will never be opposed." When Dr. Wilson drew his calm but crushing indictment of the autocracy at Berlin, he distinguished between the German people and their rulers, saying that America had no quarrel with the nation itself. From the ethical point of view it is a distinction that requires, and I hope will repay, delicate handling. The distinction which I have indicated above is undoubtedly real.

I know Munich these many years; I cannot sufficiently emphasise the hatred, not free from contempt, with which Bavarians, high and low, pronounced in my hearing the name of Prussia. To fancy that the Catholics along the Rhine wish to be governed from Berlin is to forget many episodes of the quarrel between Church and State since 1815. When the Allies undertake, with Dr. Wilson, to eliminate the Hohenzollerns, here are conditions which they will do well to bear in mind. As I set them down a gleam of hope shoots across the sky.

These counsels are for to-morrow. We must now look back on the events of yesterday and

the day before, thanks to which Britain first and America finally have taken up arms against the House of Hohenzollern in defense of their democratic ideals. The fortunes of this feudal autocracy have revealed another and a contrary spirit, from its rise under the "Margrave Albert"; and at every stage its qualities appear the same, while ambition grows with opportunity. The duchy becomes a kingdom, the kingdom an empire; the empire lays down a scheme of *Weltpolitik* by which it is to gain universal dominion, so that no question shall be decided from China to Peru without the Kaiser's fiat.

In 1815 Prussia's tentacles, already enclosing more of Poland than it has been possible to digest comfortably, stretched themselves to the Middle Rhine, Austria having given up Flanders, and no Great Power saying nay. The Church electorates of Mayence, Cologne, and Treves were torn out of sanctuary. A rich Catholic domain fell to the Lutheran State. On the Rhine and the Vistula one ruler gave laws to subjects who were by faith and culture aliens to him. The troubles which succeeded in Rhineland are matter of history. How the Poles suffered, but could not be overcome, in Posnania may be learnt from

Bismarck and Von Bülow, men that have done their utmost to blot out a nation and glory in their shame.

Now the kingdom of which Brandenburg was the centre remained as it came out from the Congress of Vienna, with one small exception, until its victories over Austria in 1866 gave North Germany into its grasp. But this long interval of comparative decadence presents features that we cannot silently pass over. It will be memorable for the rise and fall of Liberalism in Germany; the futile Frankfort Parliament, with its dream of a democratic empire; the first distinct conception of a great German naval power, to be got by annexing Schleswig-Holstein; and the entrance of Bismarck on the scene. Every circumstance that I have recorded here took the nations one step further on the path of the world-war. In retrospect the chain seems adamantine, and each event is part of the logic of facts. Nevertheless, had Britain chosen well and France been wiser, we can see that a different line of action lay within the bounds of possibility.

But, on the whole, Britain with her Palmerstons and Russells, her Aberdeens and Gladstones, her highly regarded Prince Consort and his confidential adviser, Baron Stockmar, had

no definite policy in foreign affairs. To quote a hackneyed phrase once more, but I think appositely, she was always "drifting." And France, heroic France, hoodwinked by Louis Philippe, betrayed by Louis Napoleon during the night of December 2, 1851, submitted to her new Bonaparte while stabbing him with epigrams, and sank into lethargic prosperity. Meantime, the days of Frankfort came and went, with a man to match and overmatch Napoleon III issuing out of them.

"The days of Frankfort," I said. These were of two periods: the one from March 1848 till June 18, 1849, which covers the Liberal enterprise and ends in fiasco; the other of the restored Diet, where Bismarck represented his sovereign from 1851 until 1858. The point now in my aim is to bring out the analogy and the contrast between Germany's effort to win constitutional freedom and the English parliamentary struggle against Charles I. How directly all this bears on our actual situation no one with an eye for history can mistake. I am not merely drawing a parallel; it would be much more accurate to affirm that I am describing the "nodes" of a great movement in the human orbit, as the world speeds on to its goal afar off. Had

the earlier days of Frankfort fulfilled the anticipations they awakened among Germans, no Bismarckian era would have come to pass. And it was in the latter days, from 1851 till 1858, that the ideas of the future Chancellor ripened to their definite form. English statesmen did not pay great heed to Frankfort, early or late. There, however, was shapen the problem upon which we are now staking our all.

In February 1848, France, taking fire from Aetnean Sicily, set the Continent ablaze by thrusting Louis Philippe with shame out of the Tuileries. A most exact picture of the tragicomedy is given by Flaubert in *L'Education Sentimentale*. Bad kings, when they are deposed, come to London; and the man whom his contemporaries called Ulysses the traveller took one last journey as Mr. Smith across the English Channel. The "year of revolutions" set in. For months it seemed as if every sovereign except our own would be chased from his capital and every country would receive a constitution. Prince Metternich, who had been more than a king, sought refuge in London too. Palermo, Naples, Piedmont, had led the dance. In Hungary, Bohemia, Prussia, Lombardy, the people car-

ried all before them. There was a rising in Berlin; and Frederick William IV, dilettante and mystic, already half insane, surrendered to its force. Adorned in the colours "schwartz-roth-gold," which this movement put on, the Hohenzollern drove through his capital and echoed the street cry of the "Glorious German Revolution." Heine, long years previously, declared that whenever such a crisis broke out its rage would excel that of the terrible Attila-contest in the Nibelungenlied. For a while the prophecy had a beginning of fulfilment. Austria collapsed; Italy sprang to arms; the old German Diet disappeared; and a Parliament democratic in tone and temper met at Frankfort on May 18, 1848, representing "United Germany."

But neither by arms nor by debate was victory destined to gratify the Liberals. North and south of the Alps, over the whole Austrian Monarchy and in the Fatherland, the Reaction brought up its troops and trampled the efforts of freedom into blood-stained mire. What is yet more astonishing, the so-called German democrats in Frankfort applauded when Radetzky and the Tsar, and all that royal caste, beat the Revolution to its knees. Forsooth, the German name was at

stake should Italians defeat Austrians, and no liberty could be worth such a price. The Frankfort gathering fell easily under the spell of pedants, constitution-mongers, and very bad copies of those fanatics who lorded it over the French Convention. After floods of heavy rhetoric, a scheme which excluded Austria got itself framed. There should be a new German Empire, one and democratic, with a Prussian Emperor for its chief.

On April 21, 1849, the Imperial diadem was offered to Frederick William IV. He refused it in unseemly terms; he would not "pick up a crown out of the gutter." Not democracy but the German-Christian monarchy, founded on Divine Right, was capable of satisfying the demands of justice. This peremptory refusal, coupled with victories all round about of the Holy Alliance thus renewed, took the life out of the Frankfort assembly. It became a caricature of the English Long Parliament reduced to a debating society; and on June 18, 1849, the anniversary of Waterloo, some stalwarts who still held on and had translated it to Stuttgart were thrown into the street by the police of Württemberg.

"Flebile ludibrium," observes Tacitus. This shameful end of German strivings after

unity and liberty was indeed ridiculous; but, in the light of what has happened since, it might well move us to grief. It boded ill for Europe and ourselves. The mischief wrought by failure of a genuine though unwisely managed attempt to bring about the German revolution by due course of law, never from that day could be healed. It went on increasing and multiplying until it has wrapt the world in its plague-stricken folds.

One thing came out clear beyond question. The German, who is often an able if uncouth administrator, and who delights in small intrigues, has no genius for politics where persuasion, mutual forbearance and intelligence, fair play and practical good sense, are concerned. His temper soon gives way, and he is most ungenerous. He thinks and argues in terms of brute force. He is persistent but provocative. He assumes that his adversary, being his inferior, can be led astray by devices transparent to a child; and he invents many of them. His incurable suspicion, intense yet wayward, has made the German critic whether of life or literary problems most unsure. His tendency has ever been to impute base motives; and perhaps no mind in Europe is so capable of making

great things look small as the thoroughbred Teuton. Lacking the sense of proportion he lays stress on trifles; he quarrels all day long; and he is very slow to forgive.

I am painting him just now in sombre colours because they affect his dealings with opponents in politics even more than in the schools; but he seems everywhere in public life to take his stand on the fencing-floor—*auf der Mensur*. These are not the qualifications of a wise legislator; they account for the infinite factions of the Frankfort Parliament and its successor the Reichstag. They explain why German democracy has been either a pretence or a failure.

One other cause of it may detain us for a moment. Frederick William IV put aside the Imperial crown offered him, on this plea among the rest, that he needed the approval of the Free Cities, which was not given. German Liberals had not a single German city, in the legal sense, at their back; most unlike in this to our Long Parliament which could always rely on London; for London, in Milton's superb phrase, was "the mansion house of liberty." The so-termed Free Cities were close corporations, unreformed and irreformable. They wanted no democratic con-

stitution to break down their "freedoms" in favour of a proletarian horde. Thus Reaction held its own or soon recovered it. The Liberals were cowed into silence. Racial jealousies, servile armies, incapacity for political discussions and designs, brought the German Revolution to an inglorious end. Austria got back her States and came to an understanding with Prussia. The convention of Olmütz, November 20, 1850, set up again the German Bund of 1815. And Bismarck in 1851 began the second period of the days at Frankfort.

CHAPTER VI

Reaction finds its Captain-General

IN the year 1862 the makeshift European *status quo* dating from the Congress of Vienna was not only doomed but expiring. Democracy outside England had failed, but could it be pronounced dead? Autocracy, it is true, had sent the Parliament of Frankfort packing; yet a Third Napoleon (who, as witty Frenchmen declared, was not even a second) had been frightened by Orsini bombs into making war for an idea—for "Italy free from the Alps to the Adriatic"; had half-beaten the Austrians in Lombardy; then recoiling before his own fears, not without help from Prussian armaments on the Rhine, had left Venice under the hated yoke. Sardinia was grown in 1861 to be the Italian Kingdom; and Garibaldi's romantic adventure had given the Two Sicilies—does any one remember that name now?—to Victor Emmanuel.

Strange, perplexed results were springing out of an extraordinary, an unstable condition.

In all things the faded replica of Napoleon at Paris was for half-measures. Louis Napoleon wanted neither peace nor war, but a *juste milieu* favourable to his dynasty. Half-despot, half-democrat, he seemed outwardly imposing, while the real heaven-storming Titan took up the seals of government at Berlin. For eight years the duel of minds went on, but became ever less equal. Western Europe, unlucky in this, and to be more unlucky still, had entrusted its future to a dull neurotic subject, a pain-racked charlatan, whose very knowledge of the German language and character led him astray. England had no guide at all. The Prince Consort was dead, the Queen lived in retirement, but she wrote to King Leopold in passionate words of "My irrevocable decision that his views about everything are to be my law."

I am old enough to recall the year 1862, as well as the speculations excited by Count Bismarck's resistance to the Prussian House of Representatives. Few in this country were familiar with his name or the matter in dispute. Fewer still knew anything of the constitution under which the States of the Hohenzollerns were governed. We heard of an absolute King, a Parliament opposed to

him, and a Prime Minister who might be impeached. The resemblance to Charles I, the House of Commons in 1641, and the Earl of Strafford, was alluring. In fact, there existed the kind of analogy which arises from a problem capable of being solved in either way, according as the forces are employed. Had Prussian Liberals—for again there was a Liberal movement on foot, with a majority in the Lower House—had these men, I say, been able to reckon upon Berlin, as the English Commons on London, it is possible that Strafford's fate might have overtaken Bismarck.

The contrary happened. This "bold bad man"—the Shakespearean adjectives fit him—was of Wentworth's school; but he had an easier task—not to make his king absolute but to keep him so. For Charles in England usurped powers not belonging to the Crown; whereas in Prussia the constitution left the royal authority an overlordship the bounds of which had never been set, nor could be. On paper the House of Representatives in Prussia held control of the purse, and could vote budgets or reject them. How if it did reject them? Would a deadlock ensue? or the king be driven, as the Stuart was, upon illegal forced

benevolences? The law, replied Bismarck, was silent; and silence let prerogative in by this postern-gate.

The new Strafford outwitted the Commons. Twice a Liberal majority was returned, the second larger than the first. Twice it threw out the military estimates; for on the principles of Liberalism a standing army was a menace to freedom, and the militia should be sufficient for home defence. Count Bismarck simply took the King's pleasure, and during the next four years raised the revenue wanted, dispensing with consent of the Lower House. Prussia had found its master; Germany would be made ere long to submit by force of pre-arranged victories; and Europe entered on the Bismarckian Era. . . .

Let us, now we have reached this turning-point, endeavour to get a fresh and distinct view from it of past and present. I conceive it thus. From the rise of Bonaparte to the Great War is one hundred and twenty years, 1794-1914. That period falls into five stages, each dominated by a single name: to wit, Napoleon, Metternich, Louis Napoleon, Bismarck, and William II, German Emperor. No English soldier or politician, not even Wellington or Disraeli, can be set on a level as

regards European influence with one of these. It is true that England fought Napoleon to his downfall. We hope, with increasing probability, that we shall do the like to Kaiser Wilhelm. But so long as the balance of the Continent hung fairly even, this country was a spectator of events rather than active in them.

Our wars with France down to 1815 went on no theory of freedom or serfdom: they were directed against a supremacy which threatened our independence; but in the course of defending themselves Britons became the champions of Europe, which might otherwise have been transformed for ages into a French Empire. So it was that Burke, the foremost of Whigs in his American period, carried the nation with him as a Conservative and a good European after 1798. He did not love autocracy: but he would use it to put down the Jacobins. He lamented the fate of Poland while delighting in the support given by the three partitioning Powers to the Royal House of France. Democracy furnished a motive chiefly to reaction. The successive English ministries that refused to make peace with Napoleon were, assuredly, not of a Liberal colour. Castlereagh and Wellington were Irish Tories, ascendancy men: in Prussia they would have marshalled

the Junkers to withstand innovation. But they overthrew the Great Despot, although loyal to the person and pretensions of George III.

This, I consider, was due to the "Custom of England." That "Custom" had availed, one century after another, to restrain Charles V and Philip II, Louis XIV and Louis XV. It made of these Islands a reserve of freedom which could be drawn upon in Europe's extremity, yet with no pomp of crusade or preaching of first principles. Therefore to the Continent in peril of slavery it appears like a cold calculating egoism; though in their heart of hearts all Western peoples know that Britain stands up foursquare, "a tower in the deep," it was finely said, the last refuge of Old-World liberties, and impregnable. There are noble sentiments—nay, convictions—expressed with force and dignity in Pitt's harangues on French affairs to the House of Commons; but after Louis XVI was executed, says Carlyle, with grim humour, "England has cast out the embassy; England declares war, being shocked principally, it would seem, at the condition of the river Scheldt." Something not entirely unlike this happened in 1914.

As late as Saturday, August 1, of that fatidical year, the English Cabinet, being urged by the President of the French Republic to come to the help of France, which the Germans were on the point of invading, answered: "We will take counsel on the matter." They were still considering of it when news arrived that the Kaiser's troops had crossed the Belgian frontier. Antwerp was threatened once more, and an ultimatum flew over the wires to Berlin. Our argument was sound, our obligation certain, and we were obeying our conscience; but those who talked of British egoism had been given a colourable pretext. John Bull does not study appearances much where foreigners are concerned. It may be a fine carelessness, but it is bad policy.

To continue our retrospect. Napoleon subdued the Continent; he went through to the ends of it, he "took spoils of many nations, insomuch that the earth was quiet before him." Yet still Britain held out; sea-power secured empire, and the house-breaker of Europe was sent on a British boat to St. Helena. Then our Wellingtons and Castlereaghs, as though their task was done, suffered the autocrats whom they had saved

to cut up the whole of Europe with dynastic carving-knives, on the old royal plan, having no regard to race, nationality, religion, or civilisation. Poland was already a geographical term; Italy became one. Countries like Belgium and Holland, Norway and Sweden, were bound together as if Siamese twins. Catholics and Lutherans pulled different ways under a common yoke in the new-made Kingdom of Prussia. Nothing was of importance except the crowned heads which had not fallen on the scaffold with Louis XVI. Thus did the reign of Metternich begin, and it lasted thirty-three years. The balance had been restored among sovereigns. No European war broke the outward-seeming peace until 1854. But there were unrest, misery and, as 1848 proved, an irresistible need of democracy among the peoples. France a second time proclaimed the Republic, and a second time was betrayed into accepting an Empire. The short, calamitous era of Napoleon the Little followed.

England, so far as my reading allows me to form an opinion, construed her interests and her duties all this while, and so late as the reign of Edward VII, by a standard which was not European. She thought from first

to last of her Asiatic Empire as the pivot on which her policy must turn. It seems a strange thing that India should govern Westminster; but how else can we explain the aloofness of our statesmen during this period from all Western problems except the Italian? And their conduct towards Italy was dictated by feeling, generous indeed, yet without prompting them to look round for a connected scheme of the inevitable consequences. I note a curious parallel. As when the Corn Laws were abolished and British agriculture decayed, England's vital centre of gravity was transferred from home to markets oversea, in like manner did our possessions and, in time, our colonies, divert the political centre outside of Europe.

The Crimean War will furnish a vivid illustration. Turkey had never been reckoned an integral part of the Balance of Power, though admitted to the Congress of Vienna. But her "integrity and independence" were thought necessary to the Asiatic equilibrium; and it was for the sake of India that we joined Louis Napoleon in making war on Russia. That was the true unspoken reason why in 1853, as afterwards in 1878, we were declaring, by protocol or by

music-hall song, "the Russians shall not have Constantinople."

At great length, in a style of architectural splendour, A. W. Kinglake has unrolled before us the motives, causes, and conditions out of which the Crimean War sprang. But in those nine volumes he forgets to mention India. Nevertheless, in *Eöthen* the brilliant man of letters, the traveller in the East, perceives England "leaning over to clasp" that beloved high-jewelled Empire, and certain one day to plant a firm foot on Egyptian soil. The Mediterranean was our path to Asia, seen in vision before the Suez Canal was made; and Egypt is now the nerve-centre of our existence as the greatest Imperial Power. We could not stand by with folded arms while the Tsar was coming down on Stamboul; for the Russian instead of the Turk in that place meant a complete revolution affecting Western Asia. Hence, though never touched upon, the danger to ourselves, and not the independence of Turkey, was the momentum which decided our action. Granting so much, the Crimean War has a justification otherwise wholly wanting, and nowhere in Kinglake's volumes supplied. Apart from this, it remains what Count

Nesselrode called it, "the most unintelligible war" ever known.

Napoleon III was a hybrid, at once liberal by temper and absolute by destiny. Therefore he came to grief. It could not have fallen out otherwise. The German dreamer, Italian carbonaro, exile in London and New York, incapable revolutionary, acquainted with prisons, instrument and accomplice of a gang of sharpers—whose air and bearing exposed him to invidious comparisons with undoubted Bonapartes, like Count Walewski and the younger Prince Jerome—deserves our pity, but will more probably encounter the scorn of future historians. Victor Hugo took a serio-comic delight in painting him as a monstrous birth of time. He seems to me rather the pale Homeric spectre of his great predecessor, wandering round the places where he triumphed, but now bloodless and ineffective. There was nothing consecutive in his ideas.

It was not he that made Italy, but Mazzini, Gioberti, Cavour, Orsini, Garibaldi. The limitation of his political genius, of which Count Bismarck took the measure during his various sojourns at Paris, may be judged by two samples: he was eager to recognize the Southern Confederacy, thereby breaking up

the United States which France had so powerfully aided in their beginning; and he violated the Monroe Doctrine by invading Mexico, which he would never have been allowed to retain. That expedition puffed his legend away at the cannon's mouth; and when Maximilian was shot at Queretaro the second French Empire took its deadly wound. Neither as Liberal nor as despot did this *revenant* from an epoch of violence and glory win renown. But the stroke of some fairy's wand threw an illusion about him. For twenty years he was the ostensible leader of Europe. And he led his own nation to Sedan; while his defeat brought the Prussians to Paris, and enabled them to proclaim the German Empire in the storied chambers of Louis XIV at Versailles.

Bismarck was of another type in stature, intellect, and character, as outwardly and inwardly strong as Louis Napoleon was feeble. By temperament no less than by kinship he belonged to the ruling caste. The name is found in Brandenburg as far back as the thirteenth century. He lived among those heavy unsmiling Pomeranians that serve the War-machine so well, without intelligence and therefore without question. In his earlier

years some tendency towards Liberal notions was discernible; much, however, could not have come of it; and we may fancy the youthful Bismarck a companion perhaps of Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, but a democrat never.

He passed out of this callow stage, by conversion under the influence of Pietism, to the camp of the German-Christian, High Prussian, monarchy men. This view—a sort of Romanticism adapted to royalty, and conspicuous in the present Kaiser's deliberate and spectacular exhibitions of himself—would have suggested, as it did to a not inconsiderable number of Germans, an alliance on the most intimate terms between Berlin and Vienna. For a little while Bismarck shared the amiable delusion. His residence at Frankfort and a better knowledge of the Austrian diplomacy put it to flight. Prussia, to the Hofburg, was still an upstart, a pretender to be kept in its place and used for ends not its own.

Surveying the confused situation with a master's eye, and judging it with a conscience which was devoted not so much to the person of the King as to the House of Hohenzollern, this coming dictator of a policy imposed on

king and country alike shaped his resolutions boldly, and never went back from them. The German Bund must be dissolved, Austria shut out and compelled to follow the "Drang nach Osten," or Eastern drive, implied in its very name; and the Elbe Duchies must fall to Brandenburg directly, if no other way could be devised, in order that Prussia might possess a longer sea-coast and build an efficient navy. The Kiel Canal, uniting the Baltic and the German Ocean, had its place in his designs. We cannot but admire so lucid a prevision of the future. That it would cost a war between Hohenzollern and Habsburg was fully taken into account. The scheme, let us remark in passing, was German, but not Pan-German. It aimed at excluding, not absorbing, Catholic Austria. The Prussian Empire, whenever it came about, was to be the greatest of Protestant Powers.

In such determined fashion did Bismarck, governing without a Budget, disliked by Queen Augusta and the Court, more trusted than liked by dull King William, take in hand the problem of Central Europe. If it were still permitted to show by antithesis how the personages of history differ, we might attempt a contrast in colours between Bismarck and

Metternich, to whose authority he succeeded on the Continent, but whose measures he reversed to the profit of Berlin. Suffice it that Metternich had the lightness and brightness of the most captivating Austrian society among his gifts; that he was fond of pleasure, wheedling and cajoling his adversaries; and though unsparing of torture, mental and physical, for those who would not submit to his absolute sway, he has left a more genial impression than so pitiless a statecraft deserves to make. He was, too, something of a believer in the Christian Monarchy all along, though probably at heart a sceptic. He defeated Napoleon by intrigue as Wellington defeated him in the field. And he renewed Austria's hold on Germany, while saving her non-German territories from partition.

Bismarck had none of the graces, and could afford to dispense with all of them. My brilliant, much-daring friend, Richard Dehan, describes the "man of iron" as "huge, loud, voracious, powerful, tempestuously jovial or ironically grim." It was "impossible to despise the finished picture, because the man was so much a man." His native energy was inexhaustible, his will not unequal to it. He showed in his domestic relations deep

and even tender feelings. With a Teutonic bluntness and ill-humour he combined a powerful Cromwellian cast of public speaking, original and indomitable; to which he added the calculated falseness of an "honest broker," who embroils parties while undertaking to reconcile them, and in every treaty which he concludes leaves a loophole whereby to slip out of it. His system of double insurance became famous when the Triple Alliance, formed to balance the Franco-Russian *entente,* was found to have been complicated by an understanding with Petersburg itself. He once stood for a combination with Napoleon III, which would not have been allowed to cross a line of his own plans. That he detested England was due in part to his loathing of democracy as we practise it; but also to the impossibility of drawing us into a treaty beyond revision or rejection by Parliament.

For monarchs and royal houses other than the Prussian his respect was scanty indeed. No remorse withheld him from deposing the King of Hanover and various German princes, beaten in the War of 1866. The alliance with Italy against the Emperor Francis Joseph was highly repugnant to King William; but such considerations did not affect the Minister

who, as a man of rare individuality and infinite daring, knew himself to be more than a match for all the European royalties put together. The Pagan priest venerates his idol in its shrine; but his daily service of it would lead him to agree with the Hebrew psalmist, whose estimate of its faculties, we know, was not flattering. And thus in Bismarck's alternate driving and coaxing of William the Great to play his part, and let greatness be thrust upon him, we may detect the supreme irony which is not absent from human affairs.

For this man, however, the hour of good fortune had struck. He was in the rare position of genius when it finds a capitalist with millions to execute its designs. During seven-and-twenty years the Count and Prince acted as Mayor of the Palace, managing "the King my Master" like a huge, awkward specimen of blind power. To compare Bismarck with Richelieu is natural; but he was, in effect, the Napoleon of Reaction, undoing by war and peace the work which France in its Revolution had accomplished. His successor, Von Bülow, describes him truly as "the exact opposite of a leader of progress."

We may apply to him what Treitschke has written of Frederick the Great, who set for

Bismarck a pattern and a policy: "The mainspring in this potent nature was the ruthless and terror-striking directness of the German. Frederick gives himself as he is, and sees things as they are. In the long row of his letters and writings there is not one line in which he endeavours to extenuate his deeds, or to adorn his own picture for posterity." Whether we should term this "royal frankness" or the arrogance of a successful Jack Sheppard, may be left undecided. In both cases we do know from the men themselves what were the motives which inspired their conduct. Each held the maxim, stated long before by the Florentine who taught Realism in politics, "If there is anything to gain by being honest, let us be honest; if it is necessary to deceive, let us deceive."

Bismarck's attitude towards Austria, which he used and despised, was that of Frederick, with a difference not of sentiment but of action, for which the time had come. "Since the predictions of the astrologers," says Von Treitschke, "at the court of the Great Elector, there always floated about the Hohenzollerns a vague presentiment that they were marked out to bear the sword and sceptre of the Holy Roman Empire." That Empire had gone to

the tomb of all the Capulets; and the œcumenical or world-significance of Pan-Germanism had not dawned upon Bismarck, whose ambition did not travel beyond the horizon. But he well knew the importance of supplanting Austria by seizing on the leadership of Germany; and he meant his King to have it.

Bismarck desired not the "holiness" nor the "Roman" character (which signified interference in Italy) of the old medieval conception. He pursued what Treitschke terms "a purely secular statecraft in the ideas of the Reformation," or "an alliance of temporal princes under Prussia's governing influence." And it is true to say that "what was left of the old Germanic community," which during the eighteenth century had been decaying more and more, now in the year 1862 "scarcely preserved the semblance of life." Austria was merely conservative; Prussia was aggressive; and the aggressor won.

The question of Schleswig-Holstein, of which the very name, like "Jarndyce and Jarndyce" in Chancery, emptied the drawing-rooms of diplomatists, brought the new statesmanship into dazzling light. Bismarck's 'prentice hand executed a master stroke, so bold, fortunate, and Machiavellian, that not the Frederick

of the *Prussian Morning Talks* could have beaten him. This was the first Silesian War imitated and equalled, on the coast of the Northern and Baltic waters, which henceforth should belong to Brandenburg. We must consider it a little.

Take no fright, my benevolent British companion in study, as if I were going down myself and carrying you with me into the deeps of another family litigation between royal and quasi-royal Houses, the Danish, Prussian, Augustenburg, with constitutional questions thrown in. Not at all. The matter is simplicity itself. In 1864 Prussia had just as much right to Sleswick (so we used to spell the word, not without significance) or to Holstein as you and I have on this April Monday morning when I am inditing these sentences. The King of Denmark, Christian IX, otherwise termed the Pro[illegible]l King, who succeeded to the throne in November, 1863, had his claims. The Augustenburgs, partly owing to Bismarck's diplomacy some years earlier, had renounced theirs, but broke the engagement when Frederick VII died. The people, mixed German and non-German, would be thought to have claims also by Liberal Europe. One thing was undeniable: Prussia could not put

in her demand, not even by *Mitbelehnung* or *Erbverbrüderung*, to a yard of land in either duchy.

But what was that to Count Bismarck? He wanted a seaboard for his royal master; he could get it by force and hold it by chicanery. He did so. "From the beginning," he wrote in his *Reminiscences* long afterwards, "I kept annexation steadily before my eyes." And Germany cried "Hoch" with trembling. For as the Duchies fared to-day so might other lands lying conveniently near the Prussian borders fare to-morrow.

In the art of political chess few problems have been more neatly resolved. It appeared in law to be desperately intricate, refusing to yield up its tangle at the bidding of all the Powers combined. Then Bismarck opened with a gambit of the German Bund which delegated Austria and Prussia to act on its behalf. They acted by powder and shot; the Danes fought well, but were defeated; and on August 1, 1864, Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg were ceded by the Treaty of Vienna to what some one has called the "high marauding parties."

Now Bismarck proceeded to checkmate

Austria. He had in the campaign for the Duchies found a pretext to invade Denmark—the crossing of the frontier by a few Prussian hussars. He never dreamt of observing a treaty beyond the moment when he could turn it to advantage. This doctrine has been summed up in the slippery diplomatic phrase, "Rebus sic stantibus" ("While the situation lasts"), and later still in words spoken by the German Chancellor, Bethmann Hollweg, to Sir Edward Goschen, our then ambassador at Berlin, touching a "scrap of paper." Bismarck manœuvred in the question of annexing the Duchies for his biggest prize, the absolute control of the Fatherland by shutting out the Habsburgs. They on their part clung with both hands to a falling dignity. At charming Gastein, in the Salzburg region, August 25, 1865, an ostensible agreement "papered over the cracks," which were yawning into "rents of ruin" for the old Imperial Power. It was only a truce, and Bismarck saw to it that the Prussian army should be brought, in weapons, discipline, and numbers, to the highest pitch. Men of supreme ability were at his disposal, Von Roon to organise, Von Moltke to plan and execute

the inevitable campaign. The Duchies were lost for ever to their lawful owners, whoever these might be.

There is a passage in Froude's *History of England* (vol. i, p. 480) which, when I read it in our College library in Rome, just before 1870, struck me as profoundly true and written with fine feeling. I transcribe it. Froude observes, "Where changes are about to take place of great and enduring moment, a kind of prologue, on a small scale, sometimes anticipates the true opening of the drama; like the first drops which give notice of the coming storm, or as if the shadows of the reality were projected forwards into the future, and imitated in dumb show the movements of the real actors in the story."

Such a prologue was the episode of the Elbe Duchies. Their deliberate seizure in defiance of right, and of agreements to which Prussia had set her seal; the cunning with which Bismarck persuaded his intended victim, Austria, to snatch a prey that he meant to take from her; the small but effective devices that enabled him to overcome the conscience of his king; the justification offered carelessly that treaties not backed with force do not really count; the aim disclosed when it was likely to be attained

that Prussia wanted a war station at Kiel, and must get it by hook or by crook; and, finally, the stepping-stone made of one triumph to lead up to a second and a greater—all these incidents relate in dumb show the story of a drama which, beginning on the European scale in 1866, by the Seven Weeks War, then enveloping the French Empire in disaster and bringing on the Third Republic in 1870, has now taken the whole world for a stage and the world-power or the ruin of Germany for a theme. We have seen the prologue; we are acting in the play.

Yet another reflection—partly mine, but derived from a view which I find admirably wrought out by Kinglake in his second volume (p. 142), describing "the great island-Power," meaning Britain, as "the one which, by the well-informed statesmen of the Continent, is looked to as the surest safeguard against wrong. Europe leans," he says, "Europe rests on this faith." And he continues in sentences like the following—

"So the moment it is made to appear that for any reason England is disposed to abdicate, or to suspend for a while the performance of her European duties, that moment the wrong-doer sees his opportunity and begins to

stir. . . . Monarchs find that to conspire for gain of territory, or to have other princes conspiring against them, is the alternative presented to their choice. The system of Europe becomes decomposed, and war follows. Therefore, exactly in proportion as England values the peace of Europe, she ought to abstain from every word and from every sign which tends to give the wrong-doer a hope of her acquiescence."

Since the troubles between the German Diet and the Danish King had begun, our Ministers (to allow them the credit which they deserve) were sensible of Prussia's designs on the Duchies; and Palmerston, Russell, and Disraeli knew well that danger to Britain's naval supremacy would follow if those designs succeeded. To preserve the integrity of Denmark, while reconciling by diplomacy the various conflicting parties, appeared to the English Cabinet wise and just. But they had to reckon with the Prince Consort, whose view of England never ceased to be that of a German in outlook and sympathy. We learn from the correspondence of Queen Victoria that the Cabinet favoured one line of policy, such I have sketched, and the Court favoured another out of regard for Germany, but as

events proved, wholly to the advantage of Berlin. The Prince Consort, we must not forget, was by the nature of his position permanent Foreign Minister. To his principles the Queen adhered as to a law.

Palmerston wrote to Lord John Russell, June 23, 1850, "Is not the Queen requiring that I should be Minister, not indeed for Austria, Russia, or France, but for the Germanic Confederation?" These words, laid before her Majesty, brought a sharp answer dictated, no doubt, by Prince Albert, whom they seem to arraign. In the same year Queen Victoria tells her uncle, the King of the Belgians, "It is a mistake to think the supremacy of Prussia is what is wished for." Certainly the Prince Consort did not wish for it. He belonged to a minor ruling House; and his philosophy would be, to use an apt German expression, *kleinstädtisch,* or as we say, provincial. But he was not likely to feel, as Englishmen do, the truth and greatness of Milton's or of Kinglake's contention that this "island-power" is the home of freedom and the judgment-seat of European equity. His best-known declaration, that "constitutional government is on its trial," may be construed without injustice to the effect that

a return of autocracy is always possible, and perhaps would turn out to be a very good thing. I cannot praise that language. It has happily not taken root in the British Empire.

But Queen Victoria, who was a great constitutional sovereign, and also "a very woman," allowed the Prince's view to decide her action as regarded the Elbe Duchies from first to last. At no time would she consent to maintain "the integrity of the Danish Monarchy." On May 1, 1858, she wrote to Lord Malmesbury that she could not sanction a proposal tending in any such direction, "a false step on our part may produce a war between France and Germany." In this reason alleged, unless Germany meant Prussia—which the Queen elsewhere describes as "the only large and powerful really German Power"—it meant a negligible quantity.

Sir Theodore Martin, the editor of the Queen's Letters, bids us note that "The Queen and Prince considered that the attitude of the British Government was unnecessarily pro-Danish." In 1864, according to Baron Beust, "Queen Victoria personally intervened to prevent British action in favour of Denmark." Was there a diplomatist living in that year who believed that when Prussia and Austria were victorious the Duchies would

become little sovereign States like Sachsen-Coburg or Sachsen-Weimar? And if not, who was the "tertius gaudens," the fox that would run away with the pheasant? It is rather sad to look back on England's abdication in those days of her duty towards Europe. I remember as a boy reading the debate in the House of Commons on intervention to save Denmark, and I admired Disraeli's wisdom. To no purpose did he plead. The prologue to the great drama ran its course. Henceforth Count Bismarck might be sure that England would watch his career as a disinterested looker-on in the stalls. She might talk loud; she would do nothing, so long as Queen Victoria lived, to thwart his ambition.

CHAPTER VII

Austria, Rome, and France—the Crisis of the Century

HOLDING with Clausewitz, though not having learnt it from him, that war and peace should be parts of one consistent state-policy, Count Bismarck, in 1866, resembled an artist who was beginning to paint, on a canvas carefully prepared, a great picture, the design of which was already clear to his imagination. He would seize occasion by the forelock; but he had no need to improvise a plan. The Bismarckian scheme was coherent, and proved its adaptation to the world of things as they are by its success. To isolate Austria, then to fall upon her, and in the stricken field to wrest from the Habsburgs their place in German rule, was the immediate object.

Bismarck did all that in him lay to avoid meeting a world in arms. He recognised that if he went to war, he must, before declaring it, secure the Prussian fronts on east and west. He did not require to be told that Frederick the

Great earned his peculiar glory not by winning the Seven Years War, but by not losing it; and that its termination might have been Prussia's downfall, had not a demented Tsar Peter in 1762 recalled his troops which were attacking the Hohenzollern, and so withdrawn Russia from the number of his enemies. Since then, no Prussian sovereign had broken the long peace with his tremendous neighbour. In Bismarck's philosophy to keep that peace intact was a first principle.

Accordingly, when the ill-advised Polish Rebellion surged up in 1863, the authorities of Prussia, civil and military, gave every possible assistance to the Tsar's troops, short of joining them to put down the rising by force. Next year it was the turn of Russia to show its benevolent neutrality by letting things take their course in the Danish war. The Slav Power would now be quiescent when Austria looked round for help. Bismarck had gone as ambassador to Petersburg in earlier years. He cultivated the Imperial family, made many friends, learnt to speak a little of the beautiful and difficult Russian language, and registered a vow that he would never bring the Cossack on his shoulders if he could help it. Peace, then, with Russia was a foregone conclusion.

It lasted down to August 1, 1914; and when the German ambassador presented his master's ultimatum to M. Sazonov, he almost fainted with horror. Well he might, for it was taking up the sheet-anchor of Bismarck's, nay of Frederick's policy, and casting it into fathomless deeps.

Safe on the Eastern front, Bismarck turned to the Western. In October, 1865, his fateful conversations with Napoleon III took place at Biarritz. The French Empire was sickening unto death. It could not demand aid or service from a single ally; not so much as from Italy which it had helped to make a free nation. On strained terms with England since the annexation of Nice and Savoy, the Emperor kept out of the imbroglio thanks to which the Elbe Duchies passed into Prussian hands. His attitude towards Poland estranged the Tsar; but there was no force behind it, and the insurgents had been left to their fate. Louis Bonaparte found himself called upon at Biarritz to decide whether he would take up arms against Austria for a fixed price, or against Prussia with uncertain chances of booty, or against neither. He stood irresolute while Bismarck wrapped him round skillfully in a net of delusion, with talk about compen-

sations and possibilities. The heavy-winged bird was caught. And on April 8, 1866, Italy engaged herself to attack Austria so soon as war was inevitable. Venetia was to be her reward.

Of the millions who were now to fight and suffer in realising Bismarck's ambition, no thought entered these controlling minds except as yielding money, strength, and life on the principle "sic vos non vobis," when required so to do. Here is a consideration worth our regard. In the year 1861 Alexander II emancipated the Russian peasants; and in the same year Abraham Lincoln was compelled to accept the war against the Confederate States, which ended in the abolition of negro slavery. But in 1866 absolute power reigned from the Bay of Biscay to the Yellow Sea. Three vast autocracies covered all that space, and the populations toiled submissively for masters who looked on them as mere capital in the gamble of politics. Mankind moves very slowly. Nevertheless, a double emancipation, in the Old World and the New, had in it some promise and potency.

Austria, then, "the meeting-place of Teuton and Slav," was to be taken by the throat and pitched headlong out of Germany, with a rude

parting injunction, "Henceforth mind your own business, and look down the Danube towards Belgrade. Stand sentinel against Russia; keep the key of Constantinople in Vienna. *Lebewohl!*" We have been amazed since 1914 at the way in which the *Kaiserlichs* get beaten and the quantity of thrashings which all these peoples, individually brave enough, can absorb. The Empire seems always on the point of breaking up, yet has never been broken; it may be ramshackle, but is remarkably elastic, and advance has followed on recoil as it were by law. Hence the saying, attributed to Palacky, the historian of the Czechs, "Did Austria not exist we should have to invent it," which the Hungarian patriot Pauly allowed to be sound history.

What is the inner meaning of this curious fact? It is that Teuton and Slav have "met," but never amalgamated; and that the Southern Slavs, divided geographically and forming a fringe round a nucleus of Germans on the Upper Danube and Magyars on the middle of that stream, are held in this double chain, but ever straining at it. Their rivalries, complicated with a struggle going on at all times between Vienna and Buda-Pest, make it impossible that the K.K.

Army (*Kaiserlich-Königlich* is the label on everything in Austria) should be welded into a united host. The two-headed eagle has, in consequence, lost half his feathers and become a laughing-stock to the other three Imperial fowl of heaven, the Russian, Prussian, and French, to say nothing of the Polish still biding his time. But the Habsburgs were taught by Rome, which long recognised them as emperors, and even now venerates the shadow of the name, how to recover from defeat and to hold out by delay. The House of Austria survives in virtue of a great principle which science calls inertia. Will it survive much longer? And is it, as Dr. Emil Reich argued, a necessary evil? It saw the rise of Prussia; who knows but it may look on at its fall?

I am not praying for the Hofburg, which is autocracy entrenched in pride and legalism, with a gold-aristocracy just outside its gates. But there is a proverb about threatened men. Bismarck, whose regulated aims were proofs of genius and his wars "deliberate lightning," knew to a pace how far he was going when he sent the armies of Prussia, irresistible, but never out of hand, over the Saxon frontier. The French Emperor anticipated a long war,

exhausted combatants, and his own intervention, as the peace-compelling Jove. Such was neither Bismarck's plan nor the outcome. In eighteen days, June 15 to July 3, 1866, the campaign was begun and ended in Bohemia. The battle which in Western telegrams was called Sadowa, fought on the last-mentioned date, finished the Austrian leadership of Germans and shattered Napoleon's hopes. On August 23, at Nickolsburg, that leadership was transferred to Berlin. The new Germany was divided, by way of propitiating France, into Confederations north and south of the Main, but by force of events both came under Bismarck's disposal. Prussia henceforth might claim to be the centre and decisive element in the Balance of Power.

England looked on from afar, busy with reform of Parliament and with the palings of Hyde Park, which I saw thrown down in the summer weather on July 23, 1866, by a surging crowd. Europe and its affairs did not concern her. Was France likely to be menaced? Suppose it, what then? We were under no obligation to protect France. The Queen's unalterable German sympathies now became of necessity sympathies with Berlin. Her eldest daughter was married to the Prince

Royal of Prussia; their son William, born in 1859, could not fail, if he outlived his father, to be King; and whatever else the art of Count Bismarck should bring of honour and dignity to the House of Brandenburg would be his. Sympathy went with family alliance; nor did it seem that the interests of Great Britain would suffer.

Having won his second game of political chess and swiftly checkmated the Emperor-King, it was now incumbent on Bismarck to defeat the House of Bonaparte; for Napoleon could not give up the position of supremacy in European affairs, hitherto held by France, without losing his throne and ruining his dynasty. Bewildered, hesitating, and stricken by disease, the miserable victim of ambition and pleasure, of whom all the ablest advisers were dead, went knocking for assistance at doors which would scarcely open to him.

He made advances to Italy by the Convention which withdrew his army of occupation from Rome. But Italy, glorying in her acquisition of Venetia, had no desire to throw away the Prussian friendship without which never could she have torn it from the grasp of Austria. He dreamt of playing once more the traditional French

hand, by defending the South Germans from further encroachments of the Hohenzollern. It was a well-known manœuvre, and had it been attempted before Sadowa it might have succeeded, with an efficient French army to carry it through. Now it was too late. Bismarck had entered into treaties offensive and defensive with those very States when peace was signed. By virtue of them, should war break out, the King of Prussia became commander-in-chief of all the German forces. When Thiers lifted his shrill voice for something which meant an attack on the Rhine, in March, 1867, these engagements, secret until then, were published as a warning from the new Germany of what aggression might expect.

Napoleon also wanted Luxemburg; he wanted the left bank of the Rhine; he wanted Belgium. The principle of nationalities, for which he had gone to war with Austria in 1859, he now threw to the winds. Bismarck drew scorn upon the Imperial hotel-keeper who was constantly presenting his bill. Had a good German fairy wished to bless the new-birth of the Fatherland, here was the luckiest gift she could have chosen—an impotent and clamorous foe west of the Rhine, threatening

its unity while he cringed before it. The people shouted their old song in Napoleon's face, "Sie sollen ihn nicht haben, den freien Deutschen Rhein"—not he, nor any "Franzos" of them all, should annex the national stream. By his protests, his claims, his coquetting with a Liberal party held for years in bondage, and now called up to power, this doomed son of misfortune put his shoulder to the Bismarckian wheel, and sent it spinning along.

But he was desperate. His Mexican Emperor fell under the bullets of a native detachment, and the French troops retired at America's bidding. The Convention with Italy vanished before Garibaldi's invasion of the Papal States; Mentana was won by the chassepots of the French; and in the coming contest Napoleon would get no help from Florence, now the capital of a kingdom that looked to possess Rome at the nearest chance. Paris, the city of revolutions, had been transformed by Hausmann from the military point of view, so that barricades should be less within the people's power, and cannon might enfilade the wider streets along their whole course. But Paris remained the city of pleasure, cosmopolitan, brilliant by day and by night, and increasingly demoralized as the Empire moved

to its fall. In 1867 the Exhibition drew visitors of all nations and the Russian Tsar to a marvellous but sinister show of art, invention, and luxury. There was a French writer whose fame has grown since his death—Ernest Hello—most remarkable of Catholic thinkers in a frivolous generation, endowed with a prophetic sense. And as he wandered through these courts and saw the crowds thronging them, he asked aloud, "When will the catastrophe come?" It was not far off.

I quote my own recollections by way of lightening this tragic story of the end of an age. The number must now be rapidly diminishing of those that looked up to the Tuileries when it was the home of Empire, shining with many lights. So I remember it on my first glimpse of Paris, in October 1868. A second time, in 1873, I saw its windows; but now they were gaping apertures, the Commune had done its work on them. And, later still, I was walking with M. l'Abbé Dimnet, well known since to English readers, and Auguste Angellier, the illustrious poet, over the very site made into a garden where this ill-omened palace had stood. But in 1868 I was on my journey as a young student to Rome; and the duty of getting a visa for my

passport took me to the Nunziatura in the Rue St.-Dominique. The Nunzio was Monsignor, afterwards Cardinal, Chigi, who received travellers on such an errand with charming Italian courtesy, and he spoke to me a few gracious words. Thus in my memories of life abroad France and Rome are for ever blended. To France and its achievements, heroic or delightful, I am a debtor beyond any reckoning of mine. To Rome, to Italy, what words can tell how much I owe, still adding to my obligation? The true "Vita Nuova," which holds within it religion and culture, which kindles light of this world and light of the world to come, that is my gain from those happy shores. And with Virgil I would salute the Mother of our civilisation, the teacher of what is best for mankind.

> "Salve, magna parens frugum, Saturnia tellus,
> Magna virum; tibi res antiquæ laudis et artis
> Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes."

It is one thing to read a column about "foreign affairs" in the *Times* while you sit comfortably in your London club or the public library, another to be living in Rome while history is making before your eyes at an Œcumenical Council, and on a day like

September 20, 1870. George Eliot has written in *Middlemarch* some meditative lines which bring out the difference, yet leave me dissatisfied. She calls Rome "the city of visible history," which is finely said and true; adding a little way down in her grand manner, "To those who have looked at Rome with the quickening power of a knowledge which breathes a growing soul into all historic shapes, and traces out the suppressed transitions which unite all contrasts, Rome may still be the spiritual centre and interpreter of the world." This, although likewise true, reminds one of the German professor evolving out of his own consciousness a zoology that might be found alive and decidedly in action if he would go for it to its proper habitat. Things at Rome do not move "in funeral procession"; they are by no means a mere "oppressive masquerade of ages." The city of dead Cæsars is the capital of Christendom. The largest numerically, and the most authoritative in fact, of religious communions which name themselves after Christ, is Catholic and Roman.

To an English girl, such as Dorothea Brooke, with her Puritanism and her "brief narrow experience," the Eternal City would

offer, as it does still to her kind, a bewildering spectacle of old and new, fragments not bound up in any scheme she could grasp. But on George Eliot's master, Comte, the Church centred in Rome exercised an influence that shaped his entire view of history. To unhappy Byron Rome was "my country, city of the soul"; to Newman "it is the first of cities, and all I ever saw are but as dust (even dear Oxford) compared with its majesty and glory"; while it was in the nave of St. Peter's itself that there dawned on Gladstone the first light of religion as divinely intended to be Catholic unity—in other words, a Visible Church, one and undivided.

Almost without design, my book has reached its own centre, and it finds us in the great climacteric year of the nineteenth century, 1870, looking out from the Seven Hills on a situation which dominates those hundred and twenty years, taken by me as constituting the world's last age and closing where the War of 1914 opens. Three great events mark it in the Kalendar: the Vatican Council, the collapse of the French Empire, and the fall of the Temporal Power. This was a conjunction of human fortunes such as we rarely behold. Each event has brought

in its train effects, and will bring more, of incalculable consequence.

The Council was a reply to Gallicans, Protestants, and unbelievers; it aimed at undoing the evils which had forced the Congress of Westphalia to recognise a Christendom rent into many pieces. But there were no political intentions hidden in its decrees. The surrender of Napoleon at Sedan proved as decisive as the execution of Charles I. From 1649 onwards England was committed beyond reversal to government by responsible Ministers. When the French Emperor gave up his blunt sword to Bismarck, no choice was left to France but the Third Republic. And when Rome became the capital of Italy, the Spiritual Power, still throned in the Vatican, entered upon a phase which is one of partial eclipse, but which will, as I believe, end in the mighty dawn of a Catholic Restoration.

Rome, then, is an ever-living museum, full of "ancestral images and trophies gathered from afar." But it is the City of the Nations, not of the Tribe. Keep that well in view, my Reader, for on it I mean to build a lofty argument when I come to my chief concern, the reconciliation of the Church with the

People. A museum, therefore, is old Rome, but likewise a university not to be paralleled; a home of saints and hotbed of diplomacy; a place of pilgrimage where you may expect to see or hear of every celebrated character extant; the refuge of deposed royalties like the Bourbons of Naples and Isabella of Spain; more cosmopolitan than London or Paris; and sure to be in touch with whatever great movement is passing over the human stage, so far as it can make any difference to the Papacy. My own time there as a student commenced just a year after the Battle of Mentana had made the Vatican Council possible by leaving Pius IX master, though under French protection, in Rome. It lasted until July 1873, when the *Kulturkampf* was at its height. Since those days I have several times renewed my fealty at the Apostle's Tomb. But now let us briefly sum up the leading particulars of what was termed in our preceding page the "climacteric" or culminating year, 1870.

The Vatican Council ushered itself in with an historical procession, December 8, 1869, in St. Peter's, of seven hundred and fifty bishops, gathered from the four winds. It reminded some who were looking on of the opening of the

States-General at Versailles on May 4, 1789; and so far accurately, that men whose fate or conduct would influence generations to come were moving over the marble pavement to the hall of their future debates in the north transept. There were those like Antonelli, representing an "Interim" the term of which had almost run out. There were others like Henry Edward Manning, whose see of Westminster and his own conversion prophesied of a time when England should be once more Catholic. There were French bishops with Gallican traditions hovering round them,—Dupanloup of Orleans, who was to behold his episcopal city taken twice by the Bavarians; and Darboy of Paris, destined to be shot as a hostage by the Commune in the May of 1871, while his blood-stained rochet would be preserved as a relic in the treasury of Notre Dame. There was Mermillod of Geneva with Ledochowski of Posen, both to suffer imprisonment and exile during the *Kulturkampf*. There was a Cardinal Bonaparte, reminding us by his features of the Great Captain, but in every other respect singularly not resembling him. There was the soldierly "bishop from the Turkish frontier," Strossmayer, whose name flew speedily from lip to lip during the months

that followed; and whose life of ninety years and labours on behalf of his brethren have entitled him to be called "the greatest son of Croatia." There was the youngest bishop of all, James Gibbons—the only one now surviving of those seven hundred and fifty. He came from the late Confederate States; and he is now Cardinal Archbishop of Baltimore, a pledge by his position as well as by what he has done, perhaps even to a larger extent than Manning, of Catholic expansion in centuries yet to be. Last and little regarded, for the Roman world did not know him, I point to Joachim Vincent Pecci, Cardinal and Bishop of Perugia. This was to be Leo XIII, "Lumen in Cælo," the most brilliant of popes since Julius II, more able than Sixtus V, not less learned than Benedict XIV, who should finish the *Kulturkampf* by compelling Prince Bismarck to go to Canossa.

And, closing the procession, we saw borne along in state the Pontiff himself—Pius IX—that much-enduring man of vicissitudes and sorrows, who first among modern Popes held out his hand to Democracy. He was called "Liberal" and "reforming"; and the extremes of both ends had proved too strong, in a country without recent political training,

for the true Father of Italy. But if the movement of 1848, which his example set going, had failed, he at least could not be charged with its failure. Another Pontiff might succeed where Pius IX did but suffer loss and exile. He was surely, on that day of December 1869, the most pathetic figure among the rulers of Europe.

With deliberations in the Council hall I am not now concerned. The final voting in private session took place on July 13; and the dogma of Papal Infallibility waited only for promulgation. Rumours of the diplomatic quarrel between France and Germany filled the air. A rupture of relations was in sight; when would the gage be thrown down? On July 16 a group of us English students were kneeling in front of St. Peter's shrine, where the lamps burn like a cluster of golden bees. Suddenly the Bishop of Northampton came up and whispered to us, "The French have declared war, and have crossed the Rhine." They had not crossed the Rhine; they would never in that war cross it. But the die was cast. On July 18 the Council met for its concluding act in the crowded Basilica, lightning flashing about the dome and thunder pealing overhead. The bishops shouted "Placet," and St. Peter's

rang like an answering choir. Then Pius IX from the Apostolic Chair confirmed and published the decrees. Immense applause broke out; men shook hands with one another, exclaiming "Credo, credo"; and the vast audience of many thousands sang the "Te Deum" as with a single mighty voice.

The scene was unforgettable. Cardinal Gibbons has written: "The definition of Papal Infallibility did more to rescue the Church from the dominion of the State than anything in modern history." If that be so, and I agree most heartily with my venerable friend (as his kindness to me permits me to call him), then I say that the moving spectacle of July 18, 1870, was a long step in advance towards realising the ideals of Christian Democracy.

Next day war was declared from the Tuileries. The various pretexts put forth on both sides were hollow, and sensible men asked Talleyrand's question, "Who is deceived here?" It was a battle for the hegemony of Europe, or Bismarck's third game of political chess. He contrived with singular adroitness to put Napoleon in the wrong. Those who wish to understand what is the conscience of Prussian diplomacy will do well to study, not only the record of the Ems telegram, but that

of the so-called French proposal to annex Belgium, which was "palmed" (there is no other word for it) with a thimble-rigger's dexterity on the innocent, or at least gullible, Benedetti. The triumvirate in Berlin—Bismarck, Von Roon, Von Moltke—had set their hearts on beating the Emperor; and dismemberment of France would assuredly follow. But they can never have wished that a Republic should be set up in Paris. Or did they fancy that a South American *régime* in the neighbouring country would help to make Germany secure? Who shall say?

The truth which I perceive like the sun at noon is that Bismarck, though he had talked with Lassalle, the Jew-Socialist who aspired to succeed the Hohenzollerns, and must have looked into *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx, then living in a room in Oxford Street, never till his dying day understood that he was just fighting a rearward action; or that the poet Burns with his "A man's a man for a' that," which Freiligrath had rendered into sounding German, "Trotz alledem," would conquer all the kings and chancellors in the better days of humanity. Yes, it is so; and I, an old man verging on seventy, declare my conviction that the great simple truth which shines and

sings in Burns, in Shelley—nay, in Victor Hugo, and which as regards *Les Misérables* is applied Christian teaching, will prevail. "Hæc est spes mea, reposita in sinu meo," "This is my hope, laid up in my heart."

Then began for France the "Terrible Year." The "thaw," coming after twenty years of despotism, had ruined the army, undermined the nation, and was a bad sign of long, exhausting weakness to follow, from the effects of which not only France, but Europe, has not yet recovered. England, I grieve to say—but we were all, as I recollect, in the same condemnation—England was rather self-righteous. France, said Dr. Norman Macleod, preaching before Queen Victoria, was suffering for its sins. "O Geordie, jingling Geordie! and had the British nation no sins to expiate?" When the first fortnight after the declaration of war was ending, those symptomatic battles, Weissenburg, Wörth, and Forbach, told us that the House of Bonaparte (which I for one did not admire), and the country which had suffered its rule since 1851, must pay the penalty of the *coup d'état,* whatever sins it had to answer for in addition.

But I am bound to set on record one fact, visible and palpable to us in Rome. The

Italians were delighted when they heard of the German victories. I remember our steward, Ser Angelo, a fine face and figure worthy of Raphael's pencil, bursting in with the news, "By God, Signor, they are beaten!" No need to ask who were beaten. It may not be unseasonable to recall that Italians have long memories; and that from the expedition of Charles VIII in 1494 to the campaigns of Napoleon they associated the appearance of French armies south of the Alps with pillage and rapine. I love France; but Italy is my second, my spiritual home; and I can well understand Ser Angelo. God rest him! He is dead these many years.

France fell like a house of cards. From the first defeats until Sedan, which threw the Empire, as we now say, on the scrap heap, there were but twenty-eight days, all told. On Sunday, September 4—a beautiful clear day at Tusculum in the Latin Hills, near which we were living at our country house—the Republic was proclaimed at the Palais Bourbon. It might not have survived a week: it has lasted just upon forty-seven years—the most enduring of French governments since 1789. Its beautiful and appealing motto, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," I

have often stopped to consider on the portals of Notre Dame. No, reader, I am not indulging in Celtic irony; the device I think superb; but oh, let the Republic now and henceforth prove its faith by its works. Else I shall be saying sadly, with Faust—

"Die Botschaft hör' ich wohl, mir aber fehlt der Glaube."
("The message well I hear, my faith alone is weak.")

It was our custom to go up, on fine mornings, to the Greek theatre at Tusculum; and I was reading with a friend the *Acharnians* of Aristophanes or some similar play when we heard a dull thud in the air which made us attentive. One of the men threw himself on the ground; we did the like, and we rose convinced that towards the north cannon was in use, to fight or to hinder an Italian advance. This will have been on September 12 or 13. We had been talking in Rome with soldiers of the Antibes Legion when the war began. They were eager to join the fighting-line. They did so, and went in time to be defeated. Now the Holy Father had no troops but his own. After much deliberation the Italian Cabinet had resolved on two things: it would not help the French who were still fighting; and it would occupy Rome, peaceably by

preference, but by force if necessary. The cannonading which we heard in the Greek theatre at Tusculum was due to papal sappers blowing up a bridge over the Tiber.

We went back to the English College in the Via Monserrato, and an exciting week followed. Rome became, by proclamation of General Kanzler, a "place d'armes." We were in a state of siege. Italian forces marched up to within a short distance of the gates, commanded by General Cadorna. There were these points to be settled, by diplomacy, if possible: would Prussia forbid the Italians to enter the city? And if not, would Pius IX suffer it without resistance? Baron Harry von Arnim, the German Minister, went to and fro between the city and the camp repeatedly on this business. Now it became evident that Bismarck regarded the Vatican dogma of July 18 as a declaration of war against the German Empire. He would not lift a finger to save the Temporal Power. But in accordance with his rôle of "honest broker" he would ingratiate himself with both parties. It was to no purpose. Of all men Pius IX was the least likely to give up a clear principle. He answered, in effect, "If Italy wants Rome let Italy take it." He

would not resist; neither would he open the gates. In that sense he wrote late on the evening of September 19 to General Kanzler. The Italian army must make their assault.

On the same afternoon the Holy Father drove across Rome from the Vatican to the Scala Santa, hard by St. John Lateran, and ascended those famous stairs on his knees. The Piedmontese troops were scarcely a mile outside St. John's Gate. Many of us joined the Pope in his devotions. He gave us his blessing, entered his carriage, and drove back to St. Peter's. Since that twilight evening no Pope has been seen in the city of Rome. A seclusion of now nearly half a century has shown to Europe the inflexible conviction of the Holy See that a great public wrong has been done, and that it must be righted. We are learning, with Germans for our masters, that right and wrong are not unmeaning words.

I have noted elsewhere that Ernest Renan saw Pius IX arriving from Gaeta, on April 12, 1850, in that same Lateran Square, when the second period of his reign, unexampled for its length in papal records, began. The crowd, says Renan, was frantic with enthusiasm. Not so when we beheld the last of Pio Nono's

earthly rule, on September 19, 1870. The people were silent. A great thing was coming to pass. The Temporal Power was dying.

"And so," if I may quote from another volume of mine, "in the clear air of that September the twentieth, we saw the smoke of the cannonade rise like an exhalation from Porta Salara round to Porta Pia, and at other gates there was a feigned attack; but the headlong General Bixio furiously assailed the Porta San Pancrazio, while his grenades struck the windows of the Vatican, and his artillery accompanied with its volleys the Mass which Pius IX was saying in his private chapel." The assault began at five in the morning. "At ten o'clock we saw the white flag waving high over St. Peter's dome. We heard afar off from our College roof the thunder of the captains and the shouting, as through the shattered walls of Porta Pia streamed a mixed array of soldiers, refugees, camp-followers, along the street afterwards named from the Twentieth of September. Early in the afternoon we saw Italian standards floating from the Capitol. Rome had once conquered Italy. Now Italy had conquered Rome."

Such were the culminating events of the year 1870. The treachery and surrender of

Metz, the siege of Paris, did but confirm what had been done at Sedan and at the gates of Rome. The nineteenth century was turned into a new path where Bismarck led the way. But the last enemy was England. Ruin England, then the world was Prussia's. How should this be gone about?

CHAPTER VIII

The Bismarckian Era

HERE is a text from Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera* (Letter 40), dated April 1874, which sums up his judgment of the Teuton in peace and in conflict. He writes first in the abstract: "Blessing is only for the meek and the merciful, and a German cannot be either; he does not understand even the meaning of the words. In that is the intense irreconcilable difference between the French and German natures. A Frenchman is selfish only when he is vile and lustful; but a German, selfish in the purest states of virtue and morality. A Frenchman is arrogant only in ignorance; but no quantity of learning ever makes a German modest." Then, after an illustration from a saying of Albert Dürer, this comment follows: "Accordingly, when the Germans get command of Lombardy, they bombard Venice, steal her pictures (which they can't understand a single touch of), and entirely ruin the country, morally and physi-

cally, leaving behind them misery, vice, and intense hatred of themselves, wherever their accursed feet have trodden. They do precisely the same thing by France—crush her, rob her, leave her in misery of rage and shame; and return home, smacking their lips, and singing Te Deums."

Shall we say "this witness is true," and pass over the second stage of the Franco-German War, with its blockade of Paris and the furies of the Commune, directly traceable to that awful siege? We cannot do so for several reasons, of which the chief is that the German deficiency in meekness and mercy, coupled with lack of insight into the French character, led them, as Ruskin observes elsewhere, to dig "a moat flooded with waters of death between the two nations for a century to come." Bismarck would not loosen his grip on the stricken land until he had secured "material guarantees" against a future French counter-stroke. Had he chosen, he might have dealt out to the Third Republic, now that Bonaparte was a prisoner at Wilhelmshöhe (significant name, "William's Height!"), the same measure of indulgence by which he had not only satisfied Austria but subdued it to his purpose. For in this, too, the French are

unlike the Germans—magnanimity from a foe enchants them, binds them to gratitude, is written on their hearts.

But, no, even while he knew the seedplot of mischief that he was sowing, the Chancellor must have Alsace with Metz, never taken but by Bazaine's treason, and a great parcel of Lorraine. The French cried, "Not a foot of our soil, not a stone of our fortresses." Jules Favre, the ingenuous idealist, pleaded for consideration with tears; Bismarck dropped the French he was speaking, and growled a refusal in High Dutch. Nor was he so free from care as he pretended. All through the desultory winter campaign, and while "the disciples of Kant were laying siege to Paris with a stern categorical imperative," the dread of English intervention haunted his footsteps. If England moved, by diplomacy or by naval action, Russia would move too. Then the integrity and independence of France would be saved.

Why did not England move? She was still, though discredited by years of feeble talk with no force she chose to employ behind it, what Kinglake held her to be, the umpire of Europe. When war broke on Lord Clarendon's "sky without a cloud," public

opinion in this country, misled by Bismarck's sleight of hand, was favourable to Germany, as defending herself from an arrogant invader. But Sedan, Metz, and the pitiless starving of two millions of people inside Paris, wrought a change. It was felt that the nation had atoned by suffering for its errors; and compassion, which was awakened by many sad stories from the beleaguered city, called for peace on equitable terms. One thing of moment then, and decisive of our action in 1914, the British Cabinet did: it formed a "double treaty for the defence of Belgium." Farther it would not go. And after some hesitation the *damnosa hereditas,* the fatal legacy of Strasbourg (dear to France by the noble stand it made) and of the provinces, came without a plebiscite into German hands, January 28, 1871. Von Moltke it was, if I remember right, who observed that it would take fifty years to reconcile the annexed people to their fate. We may hope now that not reconcilement to the German yoke, illustrated by such deeds as gave Zabern notoriety, but deliverance from it, is awaiting them.

Ruskin, I was well pleased to find long ago, has condemned this award by Bismarck of a perpetual cause of suspicion and strife to

Germany, with a prophet's rigour. And he knew quite as clearly how there came to be a Socialist uprising at Montmartre, with cannon to belch forth a message, grown very audible since then over all Europe, but most terrifying when, on March 18, 1871, it proclaimed the Commune, or municipal self-government, which was to supersede the State. When the Vendôme column lay dead, so to speak, tumbled ignominiously amid cheers from its base, the legend of the "Little Corporal" fell with it. The Commune renounced all French victories, and declared an everlasting Peace.

It was rather too soon. For, as Ruskin learnt from St. Paul, there is another kind of false worship, of "Covetousness, which is idolatry"; and he calls it the "Lady of Competition and of deadly care; idol above the altars of Ignoble Victory, builder of streets in cities of Ignoble Peace." Thereupon he drives his lesson home in words which, however violent, I must set down here, if I would bring him as a witness at all to the tendencies which have made for the universal War. They are not my words, any more than those taken by me from Milton on the subject of king-killing. But as Milton, though a regicide, spoke some notable

verities, which we may apply to our time, in like manner Ruskin, while he thunders against Capitalism, founds his indictment on a world of facts—facts no less deplorable than ascertained. This is what he wrote in July 1871—

"And the guilty Thieves of Europe, the real sources of all deadly war in it, are the Capitalists—that is to say, people who live by percentages on the labour of others; instead of by fair wages for their own. The *Real* War in Europe, of which this fighting in Paris is the Inauguration, is between these and the workman,—such as these have made him. They have kept him poor, ignorant, and sinful, that they might, without his knowledge, gather for themselves the produce of his toil. At last, a dim insight into the fact of this dawns on him; and such as they have made of him he meets them, and will meet" (*Fors Clavigera,* Letter 7, vol. ii, p. 127).

Socialism, Communism, Nihilism—what are these portents that, in mad confusion, sent up to God and man their inarticulate message, during the "Red Week" of May 1871, by burning as much as they could of Paris, the "city of delight" and "joy of the whole earth"? They burnt the Tuileries, the Hôtel

de Ville, the Cour des Comptes, the Rue de Lille, the great granaries; to Ernest Renan, watching from Sèvres, it appeared that the whole place was settling down in a sulphurous conflagration. I have observed in my sketch of this amiable *dilettante* and apostle of sweet unreason, "He would have rejoiced at a conquest of Paris by Herder and Goethe; in Bismarck and the Red Prince he could discern simply the Barbarians." I wrote thus in 1905, and I went on to say, "He was unjust—pardonably in so sudden and frightful a storm of war; but those who have lingered among the ruins of the Castle at Heidelberg, and who remember what Louis XIV made of the Palatinate, will be thankful that no French soldiers crossed the Rhine in 1870."

I cannot be sorry that these reflections of mine are on record in print. They give strong asseveration to my desire of seeing justice done to the finer German qualities; and if now I must confess that Renan's view is borne out by what we see daily happening, the fault lies with those who do such things, not with us who refused to believe them possible. Renan, like Jules Favre, was in my account of him a "disconcerted idealist." St.-Cloud was a heap of smoking ashes under the deliberate torch lit

by German hands; Auteuil was one ruin; and Renan said bitterly, "the good God vanished to make room for an inflexible *Sebaoth,* who could only be touched by the moral delicacy of Uhlans, the undoubted excellence of Prussian bombshells." Do we not already, in these lamentations, become aware with Professor Cramb that Odin is the German leader, their "good old God"? The Breton, who could never quite manage to get free of Christianity, said, "We are witnessing an Apocalypse." He was, and so are we. But woe to the seer of Patmos who attempts to throw his visions into words! By their very truth they become incredible.

These Socialists, Communists, and Nihilists who did all they could to make Paris like unto Gomorrah with petrol and explosives, and who shot the hostages in cold blood, sixty-seven or more of them, with Georges Darboy, Archbishop, representing the Catholic Church, were bent on burning up the past—an evil, inhuman past, as they conceived of it. These men and women, crying "Neither God nor Master," were pitiless, being moved by a strange and insane pity, such as Bacon terms, "The wild justice of revenge." Many were to the letter lunatic, others dreamt of Robespierre and his

Jacobin Utopia; not a few had been made drunk by the heady eloquence of Bakunin, the Russian, who flamed through the West like a prairie fire, kindling madness wherever he went.

Of all that Slav propaganda, so passionate, so irrational, no sharper etching has ever been bitten out than by Turgeniev in *Smoke* —most aptly named. There were some whom we should call "Moderates," like Alexander Herzen, whose *Kolokol,* or "Alarm-Bell," sounded clearly, yet not stormily, a warning that Imperial Russia should have laid to heart. I have always felt a keener interest in Herzen since I learnt that, when I was a boy, I lived not very far from him in the part of London where he resided; and I have read more than once the account of him in Fräulein von Meysenbug's *Memoiren Einer Idealistin.* There are "Moderates" even among Russians; and Soloviev was neither Anarchist nor Socialist. But the crowd, and that other crowd the newspapers, will always run after a big drum loudly beaten.

Flaming Paris, then, announced on the part of militant, international democracy to all whom it might concern—and Bismarck was among them—"Ecce adsum," "Behold, I am

here; you must reckon with me." It was alarming, even if the voice were that of a phantom; how much more if "vox populi, vox Dei"? Not that Bismarck, much less any long-descended king, would believe it. Louis Napoleon, a parvenu, did; and perhaps in this article alone of his many proclamations was he sincere. But exile, Chislehurst, and the crypt at Farnborough were to swallow him down. A Zulu assegai was to put an end to his direct succession. The heavy sportsman at Gratz, called Henri Cinq, or Comte de Chambord, had a momentary gleam of hope in 1875 to be crowned at Rheims, which he was advised to extinguish in the folds of his white flag. The Republic divided Frenchmen least; and it was, not in profession only, but by heartfelt assurance, in love with peace.

I must go back for a moment to my question, why in 1870, when France was agonising, did not England move? Well, first, there was her Majesty, Queen Victoria, executing her dead Prince's will, listening with edification to Dr. Norman Macleod as he weighed France in the balance and found her wanting. There was Mr. Gladstone, whose love of peace, reinforced by that of Lord Aberdeen, had

persuaded the Emperor Nicholas that Britain would not under any circumstances make war. There were also the permanent Cabinet Ministers, Lack of Foresight and Want of Preparation—Chinese mandarins of highest rank. But Disraeli thought—to be quite accurate, he said, and in the House of Commons—that if England had exerted her influence in conjunction with Russia she might have prevented the war; at least, by diplomatic intervention, she could have brought it to a speedier end. Prince Bismarck had been fearing what Disraeli said was possible; and by an obvious but skilful *démarche* he gave counsel to Russia that now would be the time to "denounce" that article of the Treaty of 1856 which forbade the appearance of a Russian armed fleet in the Black Sea. As he counselled so it was done; and the splendid isolation of England rewarded him.

Three times, then, Bismarck played for high stakes and won. He got his great indemnity of five milliards from France. He had by soothing speeches persuaded the King of Prussia to let himself be named German Emperor. He created a Parliament, the Reichstag, on a system of universal suffrage, thereby so delighting British workmen that

they sent him an address of thanks; but the suffrage was an earthen clod thrust down the gullet of Cerberus, and Bismarck laughed at a democracy which could only show its teeth. He was responsible to the Emperor, not to the Reichstag. All that Germany held or owned he could, in emergency, devote to his master's purpose. More than any man since Napoleon I he wielded absolute power.

But I have not said or insinuated, whether in regard to Bismarck or to Frederick II, that great men are digits which alone give a value to the national ciphers. If that was Carlyle's opinion it is not mine. There was, there is, a Deutschland with its deep inspirations and aspirations. In the years following 1870 we may behold it, under guidance but yet with a strength of its own, developing on all sides, winning commercial and industrial triumphs, increasing in population at a rapid rate while France is dwindling, and looking round, chiefly outside Europe, for means to expand, for it had begun to realise Napoleon's proverbial wisdom that an Empire must have "ships, commerce, and colonies." Deutschland the nation felt and knew this more intimately than Bismarck, whose long sight did not pierce into that distant scene. He had striven for

the hegemony of Europe and it was in his hands. To keep it there firmly he invented the Alliance with Austria, then turned it by the moral conquest of Italy into the Triplice; then reinsured at Petersburg against Austria's defection. To win over France was beyond hope; and in 1875 he thought of crushing her by a new invasion. But now Queen Victoria felt alarmed. She appealed to Russia. The war did not come off. In the West there was a long truce, never more than what in German is called a *Waffenstillstand* or armistice, during some thirty-eight years. But in the next year, 1876, the Eastern Question burst out again with volcanic violence.

Turkey, during a respite of twenty years after the Crimean War, had reformed none of her abuses and proceeded on the old course of oppression, plunder, and occasional massacre done or permitted by her officials. There was a Turkish Debt, largely held by Britons, and its "financial catastrophe" caused an alarm which a mighty massacre in the Balkans would assuredly never have occasioned. But the Stock Exchange is not sentimental. In 1876, to quote Lord Morley, "fierce revolt against intolerable misrule slowly blazed up in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and a

rising in Bulgaria, not dangerous in itself, was put down by Turkish troops despatched from Constantinople, with deeds described by the British agent [Mr. Gahan], who investigated them on the spot, as the most heinous crimes that had stained the history of the century. The consuls of France and Germany at Salonica were murdered on the spot. Servia and Montenegro were in arms. Moved by these symptoms of a vast conflagration, the three Imperial courts of Russia, Austria, and Germany agreed upon an instrument imposing on the Turk certain reforms, to be carried out under European supervision. To this instrument, known as the Berlin Memorandum, England, along with France and Italy, was invited to adhere (May 13, 1876). The two other Powers assented; but Mr. Disraeli and his Cabinet refused."

Such are the facts; and when we consider them we cannot but feel amazed. Germans—the same that had ravaged France without remorse—act as reforming humanitarians; but England, in the Queen's name, says no; and the Turks feel that they have an ally who will back them up if Russia speaks to them in the gate—at the Sublime Porte. Of course, it was not England; it was Disraeli who blotted

out the Memorandum. We have come upon an extraordinary situation, like a sentence of which the lines are reversed in a glass. The Germans, if not akin (as is now asserted) to the Turkish race, had long been on most friendly terms with them. General von Moltke had served in the Turkish armies; and mere political exigency might be counted on to secure the help, diplomatic or in the last resource military, of Austria, which would draw after it Germany, at Stamboul; since the Russian designs were known and must be defeated at every cost. Salonica was the goal of Austrian ambition. Yet the Central Empires were in 1876 for coercing the Porte; and England stood out. The mystery can be solved in a word. Disraeli was a Jew.

Far be it from me to imagine that every member of a highly gifted and much suffering race would or did share the sentiments of Lord Beaconsfield in this matter of Eastern Christians, bowed down under the yoke of the Ottomans for so many miserable generations. In the *Life of Disraeli* will be found evidence from his own early letters, while travelling on the great tour of which *Tancred* and *Contarini Fleming* are memorials, that he was ready to join Ali Pasha of Jannina in

his expedition against the Albanians; and he writes: "I hate the Greeks more than ever." Mr. Gladstone spoke of his rival's "Judaic feeling" as "consistent and conscientious"; and "the deepest, now that his wife has gone, in his whole mind." That feeling never changed. And it led the Prime Minister, with a Conservative majority behind him, to encourage Turkey in rejecting the proposals of the Great Powers; to challenge Russia at the Lord Mayor's banquet in November 1876, by talking of "a second or third campaign" which England could afford; and to scandalise British humanity by light satire about the Bulgarian massacres.

It did more. When Russia declared hostilities, invaded the Turk's dominions, fought the siege of Plevna with enormous losses, won it with Rumanian help, and advanced to Adrianople, the action of Disraeli saved Prince Bismarck from one of the most difficult situations in which he had ever been placed. Despite Gladstone's pamphlets and speeches, Disraeli was skilful enough to awaken in the people their old Crimean mood. They gave no thought to the Premier's "Judaic feeling"; they were alarmed for India. So the British fleet passed the

Dardanelles. Then the Russian army drew thirty miles nearer to Constantinople; the Treaty of San Stefano was signed at the beginning of March 1878; and on June 13 the Congress of Berlin opened with Prince Bismarck as its President. Neither Germany nor Austria had fired a shot. The Tsar was not to enter Stamboul, and the Sultan was not to leave it, thanks to the "old Jew," as Bismarck, in his Junker style, but with sincere admiration, termed Lord Beaconsfield. This was the "Peace with Honour" to which we owe a series of Balkan Wars and, by its entrusting Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austrian keeping, the Great War itself.

Gladstone said truly that the voice of England spoke at the Congress of Berlin, not as Canning, Palmerston, or Russell would have spoken, but "in the tones of Metternich." That is why Bismarck praised Beaconsfield. Liberal England had joined the Reaction. And yet the Liberator Tsar was a menacing "Divine figure from the north." By his efforts Rumania, Serbia, Montenegro had gained their independence. One section of Bulgaria was virtually free; the other, fantastically named by Disraeli "Eastern Rumelia," had Home Rule given it, and would join itself

to Sofia within seven years, when the Balkans which divided them "went down with a shout." The detested Greeks were told to bargain with the Turks; and not until 1881 did they get a few scraps of additional territory. Macedonia was left to its fate, Armenia to be murdered by slow degrees. The integrity of the Ottoman Empire had disappeared. Lord Beaconsfield, its staunch protector, himself dealt it fearful blows by the purchase of the Suez Canal shares in 1875—which could not fail to bring in its wake the occupation and annexation of Egypt—and by the Cyprus convention, giving us, as he announced exultingly, "a strong place of arms" in the Levant. When the elections of 1880 swept him from power, the last English defence of Turkey had seen its day.

On Sunday, March 13, 1881, near those "Ides" fatal to Cæsar, the Emperor Alexander II was shattered to death by Nihilist conspirators in Petersburg. I have always considered this gloomy date as marking the advent of a wide revolutionary movement, taking varied and discordant forms, mild or sanguinary, economic or in a more extensive meaning social, which overstepped the boundaries of States and gathered up the spoils of

many Utopias. The "International" and the "Commune" served as preludes to Social Democracy. In the West, and above all in the German Fatherland, constituted authorities were face to face with a sort of Religion, determined to establish its heaven on earth. The assault on property, as now held and heritable, became violent all along the line. It voted its way into the Reichstag. It affected parliamentary groups everywhere. And its indirect consequences, according to the law of such movements, were as multiplied as contradictory. Among them we have to record the termination of the *Kulturkampf* and Prince Bismarck's journey to Canossa.

The conflict with Rome which he began with his May Laws in 1873 illustrates, like so many other mistakes of secular princes in this department, the wisdom of that old Greek saying, "Let alone Kamarina, for 'tis best let alone." In more modern language, it is dangerous to meddle with great historical institutions firmly planted, as is the Catholic Church, in the habits and affections of multitudes. The strokes which Minister Falk and his officials showered freely fell, as might be expected, even on the Rhenish Provinces, and of course on Poland most of all. Bismarck

was charged with attempting to "murder the soul of a nation." The Jesuits were expelled; and other religious orders of men and women shared their fate. Bishops and priests were thrown into prison. Diplomatic relations with Rome were broken off.

I could never find—and I have had opportunities more than the average—that there were solid grounds for Prince Bismarck's suspicions of a Vatican plot against the New Empire. The Council of 1870 was convoked with entirely other objects than to prevent the birth of a German Empire which few anticipated. Certainly, no man need have been surprised if Pius IX felt grieved at Austria's defeat and the downfall of France. These were the leading Catholic Powers. But what could a Pontiff, who was now secluded in his own palace, do to set them up again? During the War of 1870, as I have already hinted, feeling in high Roman circles, which had never been favourable to Louis Bonaparte, was one of satisfaction that this double-tongued politician should be getting his deserts. Prince Bismarck or Professor Virchow talked of "Kultur"; but, however we take the word, what mischief to Kultur did belief in the papal dogma bring with it?

No; the real ground was that which Cardinal Gibbons has indicated: "The definition of Papal Infallibility did more to rescue the Church from the dominion of the State than anything in modern history." And it did so by declaring that the Church is a sovereign society, complete in itself, having jurisdiction in its own province everywhere over its members. Bismarck wanted a mere State Church; the Council showed him one that was œcumenical. His legislation has been curiously described as a reply to "the papal edict enjoining the Bishops of Germany to set their duty to the Church above obedience to the State." This "papal edict" reads like a well-known verse of the Acts of the Apostles; Pius IX was not interfering in politics any more than St. Peter and his brethren were.

But the *Kulturkampf* failed because it led to the banding together of German Catholics in a Centre Party, which soon developed strength, and in time grew to be the most powerful in the Reichstag. It may be true that parties in the Fatherland compared with the State, and especially with Prussia, have been generally mere shadows. For something like forty years the Centre Party was a reality.

It is not Catholic now in aim or object; and its restraining influence on Prussia can no more be found. But in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century it boasted, with justice often, that "Catholic was trumps." It opposed the principles of an unchristian Social Democracy at all times. Bismarck felt that he needed it; and to secure its help he turned to Rome. There he found reigning Leo XIII.

We saw the future Pope moving unregarded in the long episcopal procession through St. Peter's on December 8, 1869. He was elected amid great expectations on February 20, 1878; and his "golden decennium" followed. Living retired from courts in the Umbrian city of Perugia for thirty-two years, Cardinal Pecci took a philosophic view of the world's agitations. He did not agree with the political measures of Antonelli; but his attitude was always that of conciliation, not of resentment and refusal to consider terms of agreement, wherever principle allowed. A scholar and a gentleman, of good Middle Italian stock, very firm but also very reasonable, Leo XIII blended the devout ecclesiastic with the consummate statesman. His mind, fashioned in the school of St. Thomas Aquinas, had won the Aristotelian balance; it was of a judicial cast;

and his exceedingly beautiful Latin prose gives delight to those who know by experience how difficult is the art in which he shone. He had looked into economic problems; he believed that harmony might by wise handling be created between Labour and Capital. He took no pleasure in seeing the Church isolated in the midst of modern society. He was a Guelf, not a Ghibelline; but when the Ghibelline Chancellor held out a rude Prussian hand Leo XIII clasped it in his own.

I cannot refrain from setting down here some words attributed to J. H. Newman, called into the Sacred College by this enlightened ruler: "In the successor of Pius," he is reported to have said, "I recognise a depth of thought, a tenderness of heart, a winning simplicity, and a power answering to the name of Leo, which prevent me from lamenting that Pius is no longer here."

Bismarck went by easy stages to Canossa, getting there, to continue the allusion, in 1886. The Centre Party joined forces with him against Socialism; made him independent of Herr Lasker who led the National Liberals; and on a celebrated occasion determined the passing of much increased Army estimates. The Church flourished; but the Jesuits were

not recalled. Whilst I am writing these lines the intelligence comes that their exile as an Order will soon be at an end. They will return, but not to the Germany of 1873, triumphant in many battles, rich in the ransom of France, the arbiter of Europe, embarking on a career of unexampled prosperity. The Emperor William died on March 9, 1888. His son, Frederick the Noble, whom we Londoners saw driving through our streets to his wedding in 1858, followed him, after a reign of three months, to the grave. William II was proclaimed; and Prince Bismarck, who had lived too long, would soon be saying, "I cannot tack on to my career the failures of arbitrary and inexperienced self-conceit, for which I should be held responsible." Nevertheless, it has been remarked that the picture of Prussian autocracy in the later days of the Chancellor, after 1885, is a sombre one. "It is a picture," writes Professor Morgan, "of suspicion, treachery, vacillation, and calumny in high places, which remind one of nothing so much as the Court of the later Bourbons. It is a régime of violence abroad and dissensions at home." And so the great man passed from power.

CHAPTER IX

Enter Kaiser Wilhelm

WILLIAM II began his reign on June 15, 1888. He was the eldest son of Frederick III and his wife, Princess Royal of the United Kingdom, herself the eldest child of Queen Victoria. This pedigree, which gave him Prussia, with the title of German Emperor thrown in, entitled William, so he seems frequently to have argued, likewise to the succession of the British Empire, claimed by Edward VII, and recognised by the four hundred millions of his subjects. I mention this somewhat bizarre delusion, not for its own sake, but as raying out light on the character of one who combined in himself many of the traits which indicate an unbalanced, highly fantastic and self-centred mind. The Kaiser's pretensions were unbounded from the first. Hence he was the very man to take up ideas from which Prince Bismarck, with his long experience of European politics, would have recoiled. Bismarck aimed consciously neither

at a World-Empire to be won by German effort, nor at the destruction, much as he intrigued for the enfeeblement, of British power. But these were to become, by intense brooding over possibilities and chances, at length the master-thoughts, as end and means, in the morbid imagination of the young sovereign who now, "dropping the pilot," made a "wild dedication" of himself

> "To unpath'd waters, undream'd shores; most certain
> To miseries enough."

Heaven pity us all! There is no language, not Shakespeare's own, adequate to the "mighty stage and hero least heroic," on which and by whom this Tamburlaine extravaganza was to be acted. Sober words revolt us as too chill, too frostbitten, for the description of Sahara whirlwinds and fiery simoons of death in which Europe has been, by his signing of a single telegram on July 31, 1914, carried violently forward into a new age, scarcely yet conceivable. Is the Kaiser greatest of men ever inflicted on humanity by the German god? Or not great in any way, more than the wooden figure-head in front of the ship, borne along by that which it seems to be guiding? A figure-head, yes, but very much alive, and to such extent answerable for the course. But

neither a Frederick II nor a Bismarck. We must seek deeper causes to save us from scorning the nations that this second-rate mouther of fustian could "tarre on" to smite and annihilate one another. I see such causes, and I name them Autocracy and Democracy, Pagan State-worship and Christian liberty. But Wilhelm counts also.

Critics have been tempted to set the Kaiser down as the ape of genius, imitative and futile —which judgment we must allow in the province of art. To deny him real powers of mind, with energy to use them, would be a slur upon ourselves and all Europe. For he, though seeming now silent and still as an exhausted volcano, did during twenty-five years make upon us the impression of a demonic force, not to be tired out. What was he, then? Identifying himself with Prussia—but also Prussia with Hohenzollern—I liken him to a first-rate general advertiser, travelling agent, and chief controller, of the firm called "Deutschland," adding with Hoffmann von Fallersleben, "über Alles"; that is to say, which defies competition, and is the leading European establishment, with branches in Vienna and Stamboul. In more than one sense, Wilhelm was the "Reise-Kaiser." He

was a poster of the sea and land, with a ready tongue, a journalist's gift of picking up knowledge, and of mistaking its true significance, a picturesque outward semblance, made or marred by three hundred uniforms, a persevering insolence which could be put down by no rebuffs from any gentleman, and that priceless quality in days when "copy" rules the world, an histrionic make-up, producing the unexpected, from an interview with the *Daily Telegraph* to a Flying Dutchman's descent at Tangier. Tell me that such a living kaleidoscope has no genius! Until the War, with its dun pall of smoke, hid and partly smothered him, this man, who is, and perhaps will be, the last of the Hohenzollerns on the throne of Prussia, was every inch a king. An autocrat, mind you, strong enough to let Bismarck go down the companion-ladder, while he would govern henceforth by mediocrities—the Caprivis, Bülows, and Bethmanns, who took his orders with lackeylike deference. In short, Kaiser Wilhelm was a character and a force, so long as he was anything. Now he is no more.

Do I then suppose that he directed Germany as a god from the machine? He thought so; but the idea which lay hid in the Teutonic soul was greater than Wilhelm, greater than

Bismarck had been; and it shaped the national policy. That idea was Pan-Germanism. We have come into a cloudland where Englishmen do not love to dwell. Yet surely it is true that the dim workings of an instinct in a whole people control them to wide issues, known but in part to one or another, though conspiring to definite ends. The Germans suffer gladly autocrat, bureaucrat, aristocrat. They are servile at home, ambitious and high-soaring when they project themselves in fancy abroad. They do not believe in our freedom, or want it, or even respect it. But since the day of Rossbach, since Leipzig, Waterloo, Sadowa, Sedan, they were growing into a deep sense of patriotism, which in 1890 had become aware of its own capabilities between anæmic France, hysterical Russia, impoverished Italy, with England some way off—the Midgard snake coiled up in its ocean-nest, or uncoiling to encircle the globe. Germany felt, and the War has largely justified her feeling, that unless England came in she could break the Continental Powers. This consideration determined her programme. England must be thrown into a magic sleep, and the magician was Kaiser Wilhelm, favourite grandson of the venerable, much-loved Queen Victoria.

But what of German Socialism? Here it was that the Kaiser began his apprenticeship to the trade of autocracy. Louis Napoleon, poor dreamer, had wished that all benevolent schemes to help the toiling millions should be his design and doing. He could but create a restless proletariat. In Germany to make of Socialism a State affair was much easier, at least in appearance. Bismarck's repressive laws in 1878 had failed to get rid of the Social Democrats. He destroyed their propaganda; but he could not exclude them from the Reichstag, and their influence grew. The young Emperor, as Gertrude Atherton brings out well in her *Rulers of Kings,* entered into close alliance with Capital and its overlords on both sides of the Atlantic. But he wished his Government to be a national relief committee, just as the Deutsche Bank was to set other banks an example of fostering enterprise wherever Germans could peacefully penetrate foreign markets. The autocrat, if he is wise, will do all whatsoever Socialism would like to do without him. He will give his subjects everything that is good for them; but they must feed out of his hand. Many among us, not seeing that freedom is a spiritual endowment, while food, shelter, clothing, housing,

police, old-age pensions, are in themselves but material conditions, would joyfully accept the Kaiser's boon. And perhaps Carlyle has encouraged them. But I can see him flinging that mess of red pottage into Annan Water.

It was, indeed, painfully clear from the experience of years, that votes had somehow not succeeded in multiplying loaves; that the just claims of Labour to a reasonable subsistence-wage and all implied therein still demanded, but could not get, satisfaction. The Liberal movement fell into discredit. Votes plus *laissez faire,* ending in monopolies among employers and murderous competition among the employed, were brought under the raking fire of Carlyle and Ruskin, whose destructive logic, forming the prolegomena to all future schemes of social reconstruction, will give English readers, in a style most piercing and most relentless, a sufficient idea of the line taken at home and abroad, by those who believed in the divine right of the labourer to his hire, and that a fair one. The Californian economist, Henry George, gave world-wide currency to the panacea known as the Single Tax; but in doing so he asserted that the citizens of the United States who had votes without capital were as much excluded from

a share in its Government as negro slaves had been previous to emancipation. That a political system called Liberalism should be in jeopardy was, perhaps, a sign of closer touch with fact and realities. But Liberty itself received a shock, and benevolent Cæsarism gained thereby.

The largest application of autocracy to economics of the State which had been practised since the time of Diocletian, was now to be tried. That is the distinctive character of modern Germany. The nation was to be not only an army, but in many respects a phalanstery. Sparta translated to the Spree should be rigidly logical, except in one particular—great private fortunes might be won or increased, so long as the Kaiser's rule got the benefit of them, present and prospective. The scheme, then, was autocracy tempered by monopolies; in brief, an economic Junkerdom with the Emperor at its head. I beg the reader's very careful attention to these phenomena. Had they not been created, the War of 1914 would never have taken place. By them were transferred the whole resources of the country into Imperial hands, giving to the proclamations of the War Lord an apparently inexhaustible fund on which he could draw in time of need.

No other country had an armed and militant commerce, or so much as thought of it. To all others the conception of economics was in the main private or individual. The State could tax but not organise trade; and to make it a weapon of war was not dreamt of in their philosophy. Least of any did Free Trade England glance that way. Quite the opposite. Her manufactures, minerals, transport services, exchanges, syndicates, newspapers, could be bought and sold in the open market by German, Jew, Yankee. The whole was a public auction. Any one might naturalise himself, yet keep his birthright intact. The honours of Parliament were open, on this easy condition, to all men. Imports and exports alike were free. Britain had one defence, her Fleet. And she had no more. She lay there, in her ocean-nest, a Midgard snake whose fangs might by force or fraud be drawn; then the gods of Valhalla would feed sweetly upon her. These metaphors sum up the greatest perils that have ever lain in wait for the British Empire.

Kaiser Wilhelm, or the brooding genius of Germany, had thus not only beaten Social Democracy, but captured and exploited the strength that was in it—an amazing piece of

luck, due, however, to the strategy which takes the offensive when the foe comes within striking distance. This peculiar effect of Conferences of Berlin, social enactments, and State backing of private enterprise, was, I think, quite overlooked at the time. How to meet the demands of Socialism occupied men's minds in Western Europe. But that a cunningly devised State Socialism might be turned to the aggressive purposes of *Welt-politik,* who was far-sighted enough to perceive it between 1890 and 1900 save those that set it up? And they, for aught I know, were groping, but in the right direction.

There were many side-issues. Time has demonstrated that this was the "Main," the rest mere "Bye plots." Germany, victor on land in a Europe disunited and feeble, came to the resolution, as her population grew with prosperity while the room she had for them dwindled, that she must win colonies, create an unconquerable fleet, keep her sons under her flag, and stretch on and on, till she arrived by way of the South-Eastern line, through Austria, Turkey, and Asia Minor, at the Persian Gulf. Count these heads of policy, and you will see that every one of them menaced the British Empire, already begin-

ning to be undermined, as if it were China in decrepitude, by "peaceful penetration." The Pan-German idea has been realised, in its constructive part, almost to the letter. Therefore it was not an empty dream. What we have yet to see is whether its aggression upon England will succeed. Unless it does the Pan-German idea will be rolled up like a scroll, and pass away in fire.

Those French five milliards gave the capital needed as a starting-point. Socialism with its sham voting power made much noise, but actually served as a lightning-rod to draw off strokes from the Government, by seeming to assure the "comrades" outside, all over Europe, that it could and would prevent the Kaiser from embarking on war. Italy, suffering at home, at odds with France, had no choice but to remain in the Triplice, an unwilling yoke-fellow with Austria. Lord Salisbury, who was Premier in the early years of Wilhelm, in 1891 ceded to him Heligoland, as being of no value to us, while its possession by foreigners insulted German pride. So far back as 1884, Count Münster had asked, in a "quiet talk" with Lord Granville, that Germany might be allowed to take the island, promising to make it into a "harbour of refuge." "This was too

much," observes a commentator, "even for the easy-going Lord Granville." But, as Dr. Johnson said, "useful diligence will prevail"; and the request, a second time urged, was granted by a Tory chief.

In the language of Homer one is tempted to say that Lord Salisbury was a "great simpleton"; just as Lord Palmerston was when he laughed at the idea of the Suez Canal; and a much later statesman who let the enemy build and open the Kiel Canal, amid congratulations from our Admiralty, while we delayed ten years before completing our Naval station at Rosyth. Simpletons, not criminals, gentlemen all, jolly, or philosophic, or smooth-tongued rhetoricians, to whom some god refused insight and foresight! But if simpletons, innocents; and here beginneth the second lesson. The first was Prussia's organising scheme, governed by one consistent, subconscious thought. This second reading, lamentable as a doom fallen upon us, I take to be an old story, England the Unready.

You will not have forgotten that passage in Froude where he speaks of the "kind of prologue" which in history "sometimes anticipates the true opening of the drama," as if "the shadows of the reality were projected

forwards into the future." The war with Denmark for Schleswig-Holstein was, we said, such a prologue, foreshadowing the Bismarckian Era. Now, as a curtain-raiser to the vast European and American fight for freedom, came the Boer War, in which England played what seemed to many a German part. I could tell, and may if I am spared do so elsewhere, some very curious circumstances, happening long ago, which would have made that war impossible. But the chance was not seized by the unsophisticated Britons, friends of mine much later, to whom fortune offered it. The Boers had trekked over the Vaal; the Rand was discovered to have gold which, like that of the land of Havilah, was good; but it literally accomplished the curse of Timon;

> "Make large confusion, and thy fury spent
> Confounded be thyself."

Johannesburg rose like an exhalation, and a very unwholesome one, from those deep cuttings for ore. Let me not talk of Mr. Gladstone, Majuba, "say suzerainty," the Outlanders, or the idle rhyme of the exploiter—

> " 'This,' he said, in perfect Yiddish,
> 'Must be ours, for it is Bridish.' "

I believe England had a good case, when "Dr.

Jim," with our neighbouring ground-landlord in Oxfordshire, Sir John Willoughby—both have since done excellent service for the Empire and S. Africa, yet this cannot justify them—went on the ever-memorable Jameson Raid, and spoilt that case in the eyes of Europe. They were well beaten—and how many were taken prisoners? No matter. I will only remark that on me the impression made by that unlucky stroke was as if the Atlantic liner, *Britannia,* had suddenly received the blow of a torpedo in mid-ocean. From stem to stern the great vessel shivered; a wide rent was torn open in her side. President Kruger, whose name the British public would not stoop to pronounce aright (carelessness, not insolence, it was, but a bad sign, betokening the less desirable qualities of this insular people), had not, like envious Casca, made the rent. The envious Casca was Kaiser Wilhelm. "I sincerely congratulate you," the Emperor cabled to the President at Pretoria, on January 3, 1896, "that without making any appeal for the help of foreign Powers, you have succeeded, with your own people and your own strength, in repulsing the armed bands which have troubled the peace of your land."

Here was a flash of what Dr. Emil Reich calls "deliberate lightning," aimed straight from Potsdam at the British Empire. It was meant to be insolent, and was aggressive. The Kaiser saw his chance, as he thought; and Britain's African dominions were to be hurled into chaos. Our Government, which claimed to be suzerain of Transvaal, "kept silence even from good words." Thus began the policy, as undignified as misleading and dangerous, of handling the Kaiser much as a timid wife manages her drunken husband who is likely to beat her. An ignoble simile? doubtless; and a situation corresponding to it, which Nelson, Canning, or Palmerston would never have endured.

Since these things fell out such a Niagara-flood of events has poured under the bridges, carrying some away, that we are in the position of historians, able to throw into perspective the closing years of the nineteenth century. The Kaiser was our foe. By ambition, by loyalty to Prussia, by hatred of our incurable Liberalism, this royal Jacob had made up his mind to supplant his uncle Edward, and to bring the British Empire down. Queen Victoria bore the seeming escapade of her favourite grandson in despatching that message

to Pretoria with patience, perhaps with a smile. No more ill-timed forbearance could be imagined. A bully should never be tolerated. Yet crowds of English men and women, after the Kruger telegram, cheered the Kaiser on his progress along the streets of London. It is difficult to characterise behaviour so unpatriotic, so indecent. I will call it Byzantine, which to those who have read the story of Constantinople is severe.

But let this fact be noted: by January 1896 the Kaiser was England's enemy. There is a story which, in my fancy for symbolism, I have thought significant. Once, when a lad, Prince William at Sans Souci, or whatever it was, suffered a violent attack of bleeding from the nose. His attendants were alarmed. "Don't be frightened, Meine Herren," said the Crown Prince, asking for a towel, "these are the last drops of English blood leaving my veins." By 1896 he had quite got rid of them. He was, without knowing it as we know it now, Pan-German.

That "omen to the prologue coming on," which will be famous and condemned—certainly condemned, in spite of Joseph Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes—as the "Jameson Raid," put England in the wrong. Because

I hold her to be absolutely right, and even stainless, in the matter of originating the World-War, I am not one of those who absolve her rulers from ineptitude, or even worse, in dealing with South African problems. Mr. Gladstone was a heaven-born politician; but outside a certain sphere his acquaintance with human nature was limited and unreal. Of Mr. Balfour I shall say nothing. Our present situation justifies the finger on the lip. Most of us will now grant that the War with Transvaal and the Orange Free State could probably have been avoided by a more far-sighted and less capitalistic policy. The gold of the Rand is not, believe it who will, an ethical postulate.

Peace to these once smouldering ashes! I need only remark that the Boer War, in which our generals knew so little and had so much to learn, lasted from October 11, 1899, until May 31, 1902. It happened that I was travelling pretty often and to considerable distances on the Continent during that period, and came in contact with French, Italian, Greek, and German opinion at the several crises of our South African enterprise. With rare exceptions it was unfavourable, even in Rome and Athens, to Britain. Our sailors felt it whom we encountered at Messina and the Piræus.

This was the more remarkable because Italians and Hellenes still worshipped Gladstone's memory, as they had excellent grounds for doing. But President Kruger seemed to them the champion of freedom, England the oppressor. Had the Deutsche Bank no concern in feeing these voices, these "most sweet voices," to bellow reproaches against Albion? We know what it has done since, directly or indirectly; we may draw our own inferences. By the year 1900 the conspiracy against British Power was thoroughly engineered from Berlin, on every line of attack, diplomatic, commercial, journalistic, and even religious. The Pan-German furnaces were in full blast, vomiting out flames on the cloudy heavens, as I have seen them in the Black Country on a winter's evening. Europe had begun to agonise. A new age was at the doors.

Queen Victoria, that valiant lady, adored by her subjects, celebrated by Mr. Kipling and M. Bourget as "the Widow of Windsor, who owns half the world," had exclaimed with spirit that she was not going to die to please Mr. Kruger. But the South African War would not end, though victory for Britain was already assured. The blunders of a most elementary kind with which it began had given

place, in our "rough island" fashion, to a strategy that the Republics could not cope with, and an unexampled skill, capable of transporting over six thousand miles of ocean two hundred thousand men, with horses and munitions in proportion, such as no distant sea had borne. It was a warning to the Kaiser, had he been a wise man, and not merely a brilliant impresario. That was, that would be, Britain's way should hostilities with Germany break out. It was the historic meaning of Disraeli's boast concerning a "second and third campaign." However, Lord Roberts came home a conqueror, and her Majesty gave him the Garter. On Tuesday, January 22, 1901, she died at Osborne.

On the afternoon of February 1—I was then living at Dorchester-on-Thames, a few miles south of Oxford—it chanced that my revered friend, Dr. Darwell Stone, now head of Pusey House, and I were walking on the road which goes by Nuneham Harcourt, when a sudden long-distant sound arrested our conversation. We listened. The dull but distinct pulsations continued at regular intervals. We were hearing the salutes from the double line of warships between which the dead Queen was carried across the Solent, from the Isle of

Wight to Gosport. Of so much we could be quite certain. People came out from the villages and stood silently at attention while the cannon boomed. Queen Victoria, whom I, when a boy, had seen going to open Parliament, was now journeying to her long home. What we did not know, and what few but the innermost circle of diplomacy could imagine, was that those guns, the reverberation of which from the Channel to the Thames we were hearing, announced the coming War.

It was already written in the Book of Fate. When the Kaiser hastened to his grandmother's dying bed, no doubt he was touched, for he is a man of emotions, and the English people felt kindly towards him. But not for an instant did he falter in his design to supplant his uncle Albert Edward, now Edward VII, King of Great Britain and Ireland, Emperor of India. To make war on Queen Victoria would have been an outrage; yet by the Kruger telegram he had risked even that. He was now, in comparison, free. The acute, the quivering nerve, would be the question of supremacy on water, of a fleet that might challenge, or at least cripple, the British Navy, with Kiel Canal as the connecting-link of North Sea and Baltic, besides docks

and materials along that coast from which an expedition against England could be most easily sent. How soon could such a fleet be constructed? Antwerp should certainly become a German city. There must be a Zollverein with Holland. Railways should be planned and built running towards the Belgian frontier. Spies on an elaborate system were needed and would be bought for use—and, of course, Germans would, in effect, be spies in all countries, East and West—to provide maps, statistics, information down to the most minute detail, which the General Staff would sift and store up against "the Day." Sketches are made before a masterpiece; and the Kaiser was busy sketching in his own mind or by the hands of his agents the great Pan-German design, even while moving at Windsor in the funeral procession of Queen Victoria.

CHAPTER X

The Matter of Britain

ON May 31, 1902, the Peace of Vereeniging was ratified at Pretoria. By the terms adopted, and still more by the spirit of wise conciliation thanks to which South Africa found complete self-government within the Empire, that old renown of England, envied and hated in the Prussian Court, won fresh lustre, but provoked its enemies to assail it wherever it seemed vulnerable. Had a true Prophet been consulted on the future speedily impending, and would he have given reply, not as ancient oracles did, but in plain speech, he must have said somewhat as follows—

"War is darkening the whole sky. The nations cannot escape it. For there is civil strife in Heaven. The polities laid up there among Platonic ideals, of a benevolent master ruling over slaves, and of free men ruling over themselves—we will call each of these exemplars a god—are coming to equal and opposed perfection, whether we look at the spirit

within, or the need of realising them in visible and earthly elements. Europe is divided between those ideals; and Europe has parcelled out the globe by acquisition or influence. But Germany, which is the living genius of autocracy, is not content with her share.

"How can she be? Her population will run to seventy millions in a dozen years. She has no means of housing them at home; she will not, if she can help it, suffer them to be lost to her abroad under foreign flags; and where are the colonies that should receive them as a Greater Fatherland? Others than Germany have long since taken all worth having in Farther Asia. Africa seemed to be left for German use and profit. But France holds one great section; Portugal another; and Britain, advancing everywhere, designs a railroad from the Cape to Cairo, which as backbone of the Continent will give her command of all its resources. Why speak of Australia? There, too, Britain reigns. The Old World is barred to German expansion as a colonising Power. Yet she must colonise or perish, or come to terms of lasting peace with England, France, Russia.

"And yet again," the Prophet would continue after a pause, "any attempt she makes

at peaceful colonising—and she will make many—is doomed to failure. Therefore Germany will go to War. But first, her African enterprises will break down in well-merited dishonour. After that, her hopes to build a German State in South America will be dashed by the Monroe Doctrine, even as Louis Napoleon foundered in Mexico. She will be driven east and south-east, under Pan-German leaders. Austria will give her no trouble; and Turkey—whether Abdul Hamid stay at Yildiz Kiosk, or new and vile phantoms which I dimly discern misgovern in his stead—Turkey will be had for the bribing. Ah, if that ubiquitous Britain were not planted in Egypt and India! Then the Baghdad Railway, whose metals gleam in my vision from Ismid and trail towards Basra, might be the beginning of joy to Teutons in a glorious Asia Minor, first protected, then annexed by the friendly Kaiser, whose Black Eagle would love to fly over three hundred millions of Moslemin.

"But no, it cannot be. For Britain rules the waves, and her gunboats will ascend the Tigris; and whatever it cost her she will not endure a wedge like this, thrust between her Egypt and her India. Will Germany

try again? Yes, in the Mediterranean at Tangier, on the Atlantic at Agadir, always striving to break or bridle England's maritime power. And she will fail again and again. Then she will know that the supreme effort must be made near home. Her fleet, already second in the world, must become the first. Her sea-coast will absorb the Belgian certainly, the Dutch if necessary. Not in waters far away, but amid the fogs and shoals of the North Sea, younger Teuton will try conclusions with elder Anglo-Saxon. And other enigmatic shapes I perceive gliding through the gloom of ocean-deeps, with strange loud birds whirring high up above the clouds, forms of slaughter which never had a likeness, hurling down death or sending it up from the nether abysses. But everywhere Britain assailed, and answering back! Will the nations join in? Surely, a company on each side, growing till none remain behind neutral. Yet the war is between the Land-Power and the Sea-Power; a war of ideals and a Day of Judgment. I tell you it is already darkening the whole sky. You have my leave to go."

Thus far my Prophet, after the event. To us whose gift of prevision is small, the future was more clouded, though not entirely hidden.

But our men of light were few, and they could secure no leading. Politicians went cheerily on, leaving to-morrow's cares till they came. That imaginary seer for whom I invented the above harangue, saw effects in their causes, large impersonal issues in a world-story; but he did not touch the question of guilt or innocence. Nevertheless, it is our question. I mean that there is a right and a wrong in the human actors, even if they be whole nations, who began to grapple one with another in August 1914. The general situation of interests and forces, I grant, has been, in my Prophet's dithyrambs, faithfully given. Now we have to point out dispassionately that Britain was not the assailant but the assailed; that her Allies were blameless too; and that the Central Powers, if brought to the bar at a Hague Tribunal where Equity sat judge, would be cast in damages. The strongest proofs of all this are extant in narrated facts; they do not depend on mere assertion or inference.

When Edward VII took the high place which Queen Victoria left in such honour, two things were evident. First, this England, during the Queen's reign, was ever complaisant to the German and, from long before 1870, to

the Prussian Power. By rigid non-intervention she had allowed the New Empire to attain more than its legitimate strength. It is not much of an exaggeration to say that Alsace-Lorraine was given to the Prussian War-Lord with England's blessing. In Africa, where Prince Bismarck entered somewhat slowly on colonial adventures in 1884, the British not only permitted but actively promoted the formation of the German East African territory, which broke their own line from south to north; and Lord Salisbury threw in Heligoland as a *douceur* to melt the Teutonic heart at home. By 1900, thanks to our complacency, the Kaiser had no less than 900,000 square miles of the Dark Continent to his credit.

Even a more momentous surrender must be put on record. Though Disraeli had saved Stamboul from the Russians, and did his utmost to limit the triumph of the released Christian nationalities, England, by the time of Edward VII, was determined never again to lift a hand on behalf of Turkey. A resolution worthy of all praise; but the alternative surely was not to leave the Ottoman Empire as a floating derelict at the mercy of pirates—which is what happened—but to insist on the

reforming clauses of so many previous treaties, including the Cyprus Convention, and to have them executed under the eye of Europe.

In dealing with Turkish questions, I am afraid we must allow, the successive British Governments acted with a self-regard unworthy of our obligations as of the nation's real desire, which was neither cynical nor careless, but very much confused by ignorance. We are now paying a heavy ransom for the mistakes on a great scale termed the Crimean War, the Berlin Congress, and the Turkish Revolution of 1908, to the last of which we contributed by letting the Germans assume at Constantinople the office we had abandoned as chief adviser to the Sultan. But my contention in this paragraph is that, by so doing, we cleared away the most formidable hindrance to German expansion south-eastward, even to the shores of the Persian Gulf. As in the sphere of economics we, by our Free Trade policy and by the freedom of the seas, opened our markets, manufactures, ports, and ocean-routes, to be exploited from Berlin; so by our easy ways in Africa, by our abdication of influence at the Porte, and by our ready acquiescence in the project of the Baghdad Railroad (concession to German syndicate,

1899) we surrendered to an enemy the means of our destruction.

Nevertheless—or rather, still more because of these things—that enemy hated us. And here is the second point I have to make. In 1902 Britain, though she had won a series of victories in South Africa which no other Power could have compassed, stood alone; vaguely feared, it may be, she had fallen into grave differences with France, while her natural friend and ally, Italy, was united in a bond not soon to be broken with Austria and Germany. As regards Russia, our politicians appear to have said once for all, "Voilà l'ennemi!" The great men of the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin, taught by Bismarck, were delighted to encourage these complex dissensions. They had one clear aim: to divide the Powers while themselves increasing army and navy to the utmost pitch in efficiency and numbers. Britain, I must repeat, had no sense of the general situation, therefore no definite view in foreign affairs, and was groping at midday. Warnings, indeed, came from those that knew. They took the form of drawing attention to the growing menace of a strong and stronger German Fleet; and to some extent they created a wholesome alarm. They

also revealed to the incredulous ears of Englishmen that there was an idea called Pan-Germanism, which would give trouble before many years had passed. This, however, was pouring water into a sieve. We do not, in London, discuss ideas except when they begin to burn down the Athenæum, which is their British sanctuary.

It was not very soon that King Edward became aware of Pan-Germanism as a concrete reality dangerous to the peace of Europe. But England's isolation, he thought, should cease. Knowing persons have argued that it was Lord Lansdowne who began to think, and who persuaded Edward VII to take up the part of general peacemaker. We need not try to find out. The result was all one; and foreign Courts noted it with surprise. England had resumed her long-abandoned function of guarding or restoring the Balance of Power. I am aware how displeasing is the "Balance" to speculative Liberals; but I cannot get away from history. Call it by any other name, the fact which was now asserting itself in real "World Politics" was parallel to the conduct of this nation in every previous age, whenever a single Power threatened to lord it over the Continent. Our British King

saw so much as that, and he acted up to his duty. Pan-Germanism could not be apprehended at once; for it was a mystical religion, with legends, dreams, and a novel fanaticism, to give it a questionable shape. But a new Napoleon at Potsdam instead of the Tuileries could be explained by his French prototype. Observe, then. This first step of Edward VII to end England's isolation has been held by German diplomacy, and represented to the world at large, as an attack on German independence. The British sovereign, they said, meant to raise a Coalition which would destroy the Fatherland root and branch.

What the Edwardian policy had in view was to rescue Britain from the slough of misunderstandings where politicians had left her floundering. The King came to an agreement with France and settled Egypt; he approached Russia, and the confusion which had so often nearly brought us to blows was at length cleared up. We were safe in India; the spheres of influence in Persia were marked out. I cannot, even in passing, name the country of the Lion and the Sun, that ancient land now running to sandy wastes, without a deep feeling of regret—the land to which we owe Firdausi and Hafiz, not to speak of

traditions more august. But I do know that England the Civiliser might have played a beneficent part in rescuing the people from misrule and decay, at almost any time and at small cost during the last half-century. They longed to see the Briton of whom they heard so much good, where only the Russian came, or where they languished under a corrupt anarchy. The official mind lives in pigeon-holes; it abandoned Persia to the first who would take it, and men like Valentine Chirol preached to the Foreign Office in vain. And so, in due course, there was a Teuton in power at Teheran.

However, I must quit this melancholy, this fascinating theme. To return to Edward VII. His royal progress to one Court after another has had lasting effects. France learnt that England would be her friend, at all events while the King lived. The Dual Alliance of the Republic and Russia began to ripen into the Triple Entente. Light dawned on the chaos of Europe. Those whom sharp critics term peacemongers, not peacemakers, will argue now, as they did then, that measures of self-defence (and diplomacy would fall under their censure no less than war) can never be justified because they provoke the

aggressor. We took ours reluctantly, in a slow, hesitating way, doing as little as we could, and doing it late. Over western Europe, outside Germany, a wave of non-resistance, glinting with false smiles of peace, flowed after 1890; nor was it checked by the South African hurly-burly. In France it rose to a height. Men like Urbain Gohier wrote on *The Army against the Nation.* Socialists like M. Hervé insulted the flag. In the secular schools a propaganda denouncing war—any war—flourished exceedingly. The Government was for doing away with decorations, military bands, the officers' mess, and taught soldiers to disobey. Lectures were delivered exposing life in the army as cruel and inhuman. Need I do more than mention "L'Affaire" and flee from it? Then there was the scandal of "les Fiches," with much else too saddening to recall. But I draw one conclusion, as certain as mathematics: France had not the shadow of a design upon Germany. The sorrow of lost Alsace and Lorraine might be deep in French hearts. No line of French policy from 1900 onwards was dictated by it.

Those who have undergone a surgical operation will never be the same after it that they

were before. To what does this commonplace tend? It tends to prove a fact anterior to the War of the like of which we have had repeated and even terrible experience during the War. When Germans have resolved to commit a crime, they begin by charging the victim with intending to do it first. We remember with shuddering how in this way we were advertised of Zeppelin raids, murder of prisoners, poison-gas attacks, ruthlessness at sea, torpedoing of hospital ships. The spies of all ranks and professions whom Berlin dispatched into what I shall henceforth designate the "Allied Countries," knew well, and must have reported at headquarters, that the Peace Movement was widespread; that governments, especially of the Liberal-Socialist pattern, favoured it; that none talked of attacking Germany, while all were hoping that the War might be staved off indefinitely. But to admit these things, however certain, would have been fatal to the continued increase of the army estimates and have shown the Navy League in its true colours, as intending to destroy the English supremacy at sea and with it the British Empire. Consequently King Edward VII, Sir Edward Grey, M. Delcassé, and the Western Powers

were accused of planning to destroy Germany, its people, and its institutions altogether. It was to be wiped out.

On the principles of the "German War-Book" any war may be called offensive or defensive, as you like it. But the genius who inspired that volume, Clausewitz, held that a State always makes offensive war, and needs no justification beyond the hope of succeeding in its object. Thus the Kaiser's Council works on a system of double entry. The "just war of self-defence" is intended for the public which still uses old-fashioned terms of conscience. The real and sufficient motive is the State's "will to power." And so Treitschke, "Ours is an epoch of war; our age is an age of iron. If the strong get the better of the weak, it is an inexorable law of life." Deutschland was strong, Europe was weak; and England could be lulled to sleep until the time came to finish with her. Behold the logic and the ethics of the situation! A pretext, however, was wanted by way of persuading the "good German conscience." Therefore let it be repeated by all babble-machines, for ten years on end, that the British, French, and Russian Governments were in a conspiracy to ruin the Fatherland. Of course, it was

the other way about. "The Prussian Government," says Prof. Morgan in his introduction to the volume cited a few sentences earlier, "has always attached the greatest importance to taking away its enemy's character before it despoils him of his goods." . . .

When I was on the point of continuing this lamentable story, in which envy, cruelty, cunning, and infinite falsehood are converted by the Teuton theory of State-worship to virtue and patriotism, I glanced at the morning's news. And I read as follows: "The Hague, April 30. The German authorities in Louvain have ordered that the ruins of all houses burnt in 1914 are to be removed. All traces of burning in Louvain must disappear within four weeks. The expense of the work has to be borne by Louvain."

There is an art of wickedness and meanness not attainable without long study, constant practice, and a spirit congenial to it. I offer the German General Staff an expression of my feelings on the admirable illustration thus afforded of what their "War-Book" prescribes. To violate a neutral country, burn its university—with shootings and other outrages, *quantum sufficit,* to exemplify "Terrorism"—then, on the eve of possible de-

parture, to make the victims clean up the traces of crime by which they have been deprived of home and all they had; and to compel them to do this at their own cost; is a stroke of genius far beyond a dramatist's invention. *Ave, Cæsar, Imperator!*

I pass on. From the year 1883, according to the witness of Lord Ampthill, then our ambassador in Berlin, hatred of England was intensified by Bismarck's Colonial policy. The State commanded it; and "we always do what our sovereigns tell us." Twenty years of such "mothering" followed, under guidance of Treitschke and the academic garrison, of whom Lord Acton wrote: "they hold Berlin like a fortress." These high teachers were "almost equally united," says Prof. Morgan, "in a common detestation of France." By 1903, therefore, Kaiser and people, politicians and learned men, were of one mind. The General Staff had its plans, based on Moltke, for the invasion of the West through Belgium, all ready. The Army governed; and "in this shirt of steel the body politic was enclosed as in a vice." The double game of threatening and ensnaring went on. There was a "brutal offensive" preparing; and in a drumfire of phrases which startled Europe the Kaiser

announced it: "Germany's future lies on the water;" "that trident must be in our fist;" "when you meet the foe you will defeat him—no quarter will be given, no prisoners will be taken. . . . As the Huns a thousand years ago under Attila . . . so may the name of Germany become known;" "you may have to fire on your own parents or brothers. Prove your fidelity then by your sacrifice;" "you must all have only one will, and it is mine; there is only one law, and it is mine;" "nothing must happen anywhere in the world without Germany's consent;" and "we stand in bitter need of a great German Navy."

These calculated explosions did their work. They cleared the ground. Obedient as an echo, the Reichstag voted for a scheme by which the Navy "should become so formidable that not even the mightiest"—read in margin the British—"would dare to attack it." In 1907-8 Heligoland was sheathed in concrete and made a "German Cronstadt, covering the mouths of Weser, Elbe, and the Kiel Canal." Those of us who were moving about in the Reich just then could hear of excursion-trains carrying patriots at cheap rates by the thousand to admire the new Gibraltar. We heard many

other things of similar moment; but England was cumbered about much serving; and when Mr. Lloyd George passed through Frankfort, his errand was to find out whether he had started National Insurance on the best lines. Our own "Navy League" was a private fancy, with twenty thousand members. The German had a million, and they believed in their kind of National Insurance. Their Army, in a time of peace, when Russia sat licking her wounds inflicted by Japan, and when the West lay still, amounted to three-quarters of a million, ready for *Krieg-mobil.* But the Kaiser had meditated peace from his tender nails; only, as Treitschke wrote in 1863, the Almighty had not "commanded us Germans to allow our enemy to march undisturbed on Berlin."

This was the double game of menace and make-believe at which Kaiser Wilhelm showed himself an adept. He longed—oh, how ardently!—for alliance with France. He slipped into Paris *incognito,* they say. But England, but Windsor, was his boyhood's home. He took liberties with our ironclads, as being a British Admiral. He perorated at Guildhall on the blessings of peace. He came over uninvited with a staff of secretaries, and spied out the land. He wrote a private letter to

Lord Tweedmouth, who was First Lord of the Admiralty, on February 17, 1908, to help in cutting down our Naval Estimates. He advised Mr. Haldane how to set about reorganising the little Army of Britain. His brother, Prince Henry, rode through England at the head of several score of motor-cars; and our Teuton visitors photographed, sketched, took notes for a military Baedeker. The German Admiralty did not lag behind. Their fleets manœuvred off Devonport (to which Heligoland's fortification was an answer) and in Bantry Bay. I had nearly forgotten the staff-ride of German officers through Kent, the letting loose of a couple of thousand carrier-pigeons from Dover, the visits of distinguished generals and military experts to the East Coast and the Mersey during their holidays. England lay in her magic sleep; the Kaiser had certainly hypnotised his venerable foster-mother.

And each time he came to flatter he went back to execute the next part of the Great Plan. It is all down in black and white; confront the dates, and draw your conclusions. Never was a murder more carefully thought out by a Palmer of Rugeley than was the assassination of the British Power by Queen

Victoria's grandson. I speak on the evidence. And I defy England's most inveterate enemy to show that this country had intended mischief to the German people, or to the House of Hohenzollern. As for France, the Teuton diplomacy, inventive as it is, could trump up no pretext on which to send its ultimatum of July 30, 1914, except the fact of the understanding with Russia, now nearly one quarter of a century old.

But I must go farther still. Britain would not only not make war on the Fatherland; she refused to provoke it by framing an adequate defence. Her Tory Government did as little as the Liberal-Socialist Governments which from 1905 to 1914 held the reins. They trusted the Kaiser; they scouted the Pan-German peril. I recall with pride and sorrow my friend, the late Sir Rowland Blennerhasset, who knew Germany and its rulers more intimately than any other English-speaking writer except Lord Acton. His wife, German born, was the most learned of literary women in the German Empire. I might appeal on this head to Count von Hertling, the Bavarian Premier, who had every opportunity of acquaintance with her family and her writings. Sir Rowland, then, published in

the *National Review* a series of articles, laying bare the full political scheme of Prussian expansion, which had taken in Austria by the way, and was absorbing the Turkish dominions—in short, the thing we have seen accomplished. Other experts revealed the hopes and resources of the German Fleet. Others again called attention loudly to the significance of the Baghdad Railway, which the Deutsche Bank proposed to build chiefly with cash drawn from the pockets of John Bull. Even on the mysterious theme of German finance in the City, disclosures were not lacking. Fate, so to speak, was showing her cards.

But did Premier or Foreign Secretary look at them? On the contrary. With exquisite politeness they held their eyes down and gazed on the floor—of the House of Commons. They would not believe, although they might have seen. Sir Edward Grey was willing to let the Baghdad Expedition—directed, as our armies know this deadly springtime, against Egypt and India—was willing, I repeat, to let it run upon British sleepers, all expenses found, had not private effort in England's cause obliged the official mind to retract its decision. Lord Roberts

could not get a hearing for his plans of Home Defence. But the Fleet was starved; or, to quote the convenient words of Emil Reich on the years 1904-1907: "while the British Naval Estimates have been reduced by six millions sterling, the German have increased by three millions. While British arsenals and dock-yards are being reduced and neglected, those of Germany are being rapidly developed. It is only a continuity of policy on both sides that has led to the reduction of the number of British ships in full commission and an increase in the German." In 1902 we had "no North Sea Fleet and no North Sea policy." The year after saw a Committee of National Defence set up; our great ships were to leave the Mediterranean, which was put in charge of our new friends, though not yet allies, the French; we should then be able to keep a protecting eye on the German Ocean. But we wanted a Naval basis for the new departure, and Rosyth was fixed upon. It would take ten years to improve the existing anchorage. A North Sea Fleet came into precarious being. But "its ships were not modern, or in the least capable of meeting the German squadrons," did they come to invade us from Emden and the Frisian sands. When

war broke out in 1914, Rosyth was still waiting to be improved into a base. Government sternly frowned on the project of a ship canal between the Forth and the Clyde. And this was England's attack on Germany.

CHAPTER XI

Lightning out of the East

TURKEY, the predominant Power of the Near East," said General von Bernhardi, writing in October, 1911, "is of paramount importance to us Germans. She is our natural ally. Turkey is the only Power which can threaten England's position in Egypt and menace the short sea-route and the land communications to India." These were among the motives which had induced the Kaiser to take under his protection so far back as 1898 the Sultan Abdul Hamid, whom Mr. Gladstone branded as the "Great Assassin on a throne." The Sultan was held in this country to be answerable for the massacre of many thousands of Armenians. During the present War Turkish free lances have rooted out the whole nation with indescribable fury; while the Germans have looked on and the Kaiser made no sign. It is evident, therefore, that in 1898 he had completely adopted the principles which make of success in Statecraft

the justification of exploiting the crimes of third persons, "such as assassination, incendiarism, robbery, and the like." When he thereby became suzerain of the Sultan-Caliph he was but obeying his own War-Book.

As already noted, between Prussians and Turks there had long existed a sympathy, of race perhaps, but of aims and character without a doubt. Both were proud, self-centred, insolent slave-drivers, at odds with Liberal Europe, orthodox fanatics of a religion which served them at once as Church and State, in virtue of which they found themselves lords of the ascendant. To the mind of Turk as of Teuton, peace was "the suspension of a state of war"; and man's noblest normal condition was fighting. General von Moltke, who came down in the line of thought from Clausewitz, had when young trained a portion of the Ottoman Army. Now General von der Goltz, his disciple, would undertake to beat into these dull, brave men the German system of drill and discipline. Fate hid from his eyes that one day the rifle of a Germanised Turk would shoot him dead, in an Asiatic campaign to withstand the Russians and the English. Bismarck, at the Congress of Berlin, aided Beaconsfield to rescue Turkey in Europe from utter dissolu-

tion. The Kaiser was described in the years after 1898 to the thousands of the faithful as a converted Nazarene; his silver lamp hanging before the shrine of Saladin, Kurdish saint and hero, bore witness to his faith in the Prophet, and was regarded as a thankoffering. "Protector of Islam" might be added to his other titles; fez or turban to his official headgear; "Allah Akbar" to his war-cries. He had lifted his glass and thundered "Hurrah!" at many a royal banquet. In 1908, by a mocking echo from Stamboul, he and all Europe heard the ironical answer, "Huriyeh!" The "Committee of Union and Progress" raised it in token that they were bringing "enlightenment" to the subjects of Abdul Hamid.

"Huriyeh," we learn from Sir Mark Sykes, "is a portmanteau expression of the greatest capacity; it at once describes an era, an historical incident, a mood, and a school of thought; also, it has various interpretations besides; among others it means 'liberty.'" This Pandora-box, with Hope standing conspicuous above its motley contents, had been conveyed to the Golden Horn from Paris by a horde of adventurers, whom the present Shereef of Mecca and King of the Hejaz denounced in solemn terms to all true Moslems

as renegades to Islam or to Judaism, of which respectively they were born subjects; as gypsies and nondescript trash; offscourings of the East thrown back by the West and bent on the destruction of religion. Their leaders, Enver Bey, Niazi Bey, and the rest, called themselves "Young Turks"; their object was to inaugurate a French Revolution in Turkey, by which all the nationalities owing allegiance to the Sublime Porte should become free and equal.

Such was the meaning of "Huriyeh"—not the Koran and the sword, but the principles of 1789 with a Civil Constitution. From Salonica they directed their efforts, through well-advised anarchy, to break up the old system. Abdul Hamid yielded in appearance, perhaps even in fact. He restored the Constitution of 1876, which he had given and taken away, with its grant of "equality before the law" to all his subjects of whatever race or creed. Universal brotherhood was proclaimed. Turks, Greeks, Albanians, Jews, Armenians, embraced in the open. Enver Bey and his "perverted freemasonry" won loud applause from the Liberal West. But imagine what a counterstroke this was felt to be in Potsdam! Yet the new-drilled Turkish army was marching pretty fast, at the bidding of the Committee, towards

the Sultan's deposition. And how could the Pan-German idea be secured now?

"Liberty" struck its first blow on July 22, 1908. We cannot believe that the Central Empires contrived "Huriyeh"; or that they lost one moment before taking counsel together. The man of the hour was Von Aerenthal, an ambitious Austrian minister. By his advice, fatal to millions of men in the sequel, a step was determined upon which I count as being the immediate occasion of the World-War. He persuaded the Emperor-King, Francis Joseph, to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. This meant nothing else than a violation of the Berlin Treaty; it was to tear these provinces from the Sultan, and finally to enclose Serbia in a ring-fence which during thirty years she had been striving her utmost to elude.

Francis Joseph, a man upon whom all the sorrows of life had come, but who learnt so little from them, signed that decree on October 2, 1908. The Kaiser had praised him for his backing, as a "brilliant second" of Germany, in the political duel at Algeciras; he had promised an equal return. The call was now made. For by seizing the two provinces of which Austria was but the legal administrator, ambitious Aerenthal raised the half-

slumbering Eastern Question to a frenzy of strife. On October 5, 1908, Bulgaria, which always had understandings with Austria, declared her independence. The Balkans were shaken as by an earthquake. Russia, which had created them, was the natural guardian of these new Christian States; what would Russia do? Thus, like a brand into a powder-magazine, the question had been flung into the midst of the Great Powers which, when it should be stirred up a second time, in July 1914, would kindle all the world.

Russia took half a stride forward, since the Tsar was bound to protest. Then the Kaiser leaped up "in shining armour," and dared him to advance another inch. This very curious duel, or flourish before possible fighting, will reward our close attention. The two Powers did not engage in war; but Prussia won a victory more than diplomatic, while the huge Slav Empire underwent defeat. How was the result achieved? I answer, by calculation, or by what is known in physics as "potential energy." The Prussian theory of a policy which always moves on force, though not necessarily breaking the nominal peace, never had a more complete illustration.

When the Kaiser says repeatedly, "I did not

want war; I have not willed it," he speaks as "falsely true" as any oracle ever did. What he wanted were the spoils, not the combat; no hazards, no German lists of casualties, but the prize which millions of casualties could only win. Bear this Prussian double-tongued dealing always in mind; you will then have mastered the dialect and the morals of the Wilhelmstrasse. It is the secret of successful juggling in diplomacy. You never intend anything but peace; only your peace is armed, a *prologus galeatus* to exterminating war, should your modest request meet denial. There is a perfect story picturing the situation, about a "Coffee-King," in Lawson's *Frenzied Finance,* which in my gasping for space I have no room to insert. But go back to our political chessboard. A consummate player, who knows himself to be within three—nay, within six, moves of giving checkmate, points out the inevitable end to his adversary, and wins the game without troubling to move the pieces. Even so will be the compelling method of "potential energy" in *Weltpolitik.* Russia was made to see three moves ahead; the chessboard fell with a crash; but the Balkan Alliance sprang up armed.

Yes, in spite of Clausewitz, the best-laid

schemes of Berlin "oft gang a-gley," and so they did in this able device of pushing Austria towards the Aegean, thus realising another stage of the Pan-German advance. For, as I used to tell unbelieving Oxfordshire farmers in 1886, we, that is to say, Great Britain, had a life-and-death interest in Salonica. They had never heard of such a place; and could scarcely credit that St. Paul had written Epistles to the natives in those parts. Salonica is a sad name to many of us now. But thus the situation was created which followed soon upon the policy of Vienna condemning Serbia to be an Austro-Hungarian "enclave," without a seaport, without markets, unless the swineherds of the Danube would be content to sell their produce in the Dual Empire. And Russia with its almighty Tsar could not come to the aid of the Balkans.

Here the double and treble distilled treachery of the Prussian system may be caught in the act. Germany had not renewed Bismarck's reinsurance at Petersburg. But the Kaiser, as if he were the late Charles Pearson, had driven Russian fancy distracted by constant talk and a picture—literally painted by his own amateur hand—of the "Yellow Peril." Japan was going to swallow up Eastern Asia.

Must we repeat the muddled story of Port Arthur, so discreditable to English diplomacy; —the acquisition by the Prussian "mailed fist" of Kiao-Chau; the Russo-Japanese War; the Dogger Bank disaster; the triumph of science in Japanese hands; the Treaty, under American auspices, of Portsmouth, U.S.A.? Happily, there is no need. Remark, however, the invariable mischief-making which would seem to be the Hohenzollern conception of foreign policy. Bismarck encouraged France to seek expansion in Farther Asia that she might keep her hands full, and off Germany. He manœuvred the Court of Vienna towards the Balkans chiefly on the same account; for he was never exactly a Pan-German. And the Kaiser stands responsible for the challenging acts of Russia, to which Tokio could not reply except by war. The false intelligence which brought on the Dogger Bank incident, and almost, in consequence, hostilities between England and Russia, has been confidently traced to Berlin. For the Teutonic key-word is *Schadenfreude,* delight in another's misfortune. But though in 1908 and 1912 the Tsar did not dare to move, the Balkans could form a league. To the world's astonishment that league proved itself capable of miracles.

In 1912 another War of Liberation flamed up. And the last agony of Turkey in Europe still holds us at gaze.

For, to quote Sir Mark Sykes again, who, from his own point of view, is admirable on this subject, "The fall of Abdul Hamid"—he was deposed in 1909—"has been the fall, not of a despot or tyrant, but of a people and an idea. . . . He ruled ill, in blood, confusion, and terror." He fought for the old order, "pertinaciously but despairingly." And so, his surrender to the "Young Turks," who pretended to have drunk deep of the spirit of the age, was not quite unwilling. But, continues Sir Mark, "in the place of theocracy, Imperial prestige, and tradition, came atheism, Jacobinism, materialism, and licence. . . . In an hour, Constantinople changed; Islam, as understood by the theologians, as preached in the mosques, as the moral support of the people, as the inspiration of the army, died in a moment; the Caliphate, the clergy, the Koran, ceased to hold or inspire."

And in that hour, Macedonia calling to them, Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbians, Montenegrins, united to their wonder by the Cretan Venizelos, nay, by Ferdinand the Fox, poured out in battle array, soldiers of the Cross,

trained to the best weapons, with modern French artillery, and rushed upon the German-drilled Ottomans, who faltered and fled before them. It was a strange great epic, that first Balkan War, in the dark autumn of 1912. "Turkey in Europe was lost," writes its friend, Sir Mark Sykes, "lost because dissipated, half-educated, emasculated *babus* could not lead a disillusioned peasantry whose God had hidden His face from a faithless people."

I quote with respect; but in these matters we must choose our side. The Allies have chosen theirs in the decisive reply to President Wilson, where they announce their intention (as I find it rendered in the *National Review*, May 1917) as "the setting free of the populations subject to the bloody tyranny of the Turks, and the turning out of Europe of the Ottoman Empire." For myself, I printed on January 1, 1913, the following words under title, "The Year of Redemption." I take this "child of golden Hope" into my arms once more.

"Few of us," I said, "that remember the Crimean War with its impotent conclusion at Paris in 1856, or the iniquitous Treaty of Berlin forced upon Europe by Prince Bismarck and Lord Beaconsfield in 1878, ever

hoped to witness the great deliverance of Christian serfs from Turkish misrule that has now come to pass. The cannon of Bulgaria have been heard thundering in the heart of Constantinople. The Ottomans have been swept, bag and baggage, out of Macedonia. The Greeks hold Salonica by right of their sharp sword. The Serbians lie entrenched and victorious in their ancient capital, Uskub, and have marched over the mountains down to the shining waters of the Adriatic at Durazzo. The Montenegrins keep watch round Scutari, 'the Desired.' Turkey in Europe is, to all intents, a thing of the past. Let diplomacy juggle and cheat as it will—as it always has juggled and cheated—the year 1912 remains the Year of Redemption. And the enslaved peoples themselves have wrought it, with a courage, a science, a splendour of design and united action, that leave the whole world agape in admiration at their exploits. Not Russia, not Austria, has conquered the old enemy of Christendom; but these shepherds, these farmers, these merchants—yea, these keepers of swine in Serbia. It is the hour of the Magnificat: 'He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath exalted them of low degree.' Fifty and six years ago,

Europe affirmed the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Providence judged a very different judgment, and has now executed it by the hands of the long-despised Greeks and Slavs."

I published these words, which still have life in them and truth, during the armistice, when Sir Edward Grey was presiding (and his virtual shelving in this manner we attribute to German astuteness) over the ineffective Conference in London. Negotiations failed; the war began again. Sir Mark Sykes writes of "the unnatural Balkan Confederation," as if there were something monstrous in Christians who were, or whose fathers had been, "rayahs" under the Turk, forming a league against him. Unhappily, there sat on the throne of Bulgaria one who was an Austrian officer before all things, and who sent his Dr. Danev to bring the key of Stamboul from Vienna, where it had long been guarded. In the first phase of the war the lines of Chatalja had proved too hard for King Ferdinand's exhausted troops. A comparatively moderate Treaty of Peace with Turkey now followed. But it left large territories to be divided. The Balkan alliance fell to pieces. And Ferdinand, who wanted Macedonia for himself, acting through his general Savov, while Austria gave him the

needful impulse, committed as black and fatal a deed of treachery as may well be conceived, by attacking his late friends and comrades unexpectedly, on June 16 (O.S.), 1913. Four days earlier, M. Sazonov wrote to this officer-king: "You are acting on the advice of Austria; you are free. Russia and Slavdom are rejected. We have done our duty. . . . Forget the existence of any of our engagements from 1902 down to this day."

Once more the diplomacy of the Ballplatz was blowing the war-furnace into a blaze. On the other hand, as Mr. Douglas Sladen well observes, "the strength of the Balkan League threw a power as strong as Austria into the balance of Europe on the Russian side. To suppose that Russia took any part in breaking it up is sheer imbecility." And it is false. For on June 15 (O.S.) Count Tarnovski, Austrian Minister at Sofia, telegraphed to Count Berchtold at Vienna: "Bulgaria wishes to know if she will have a free hand in attacking Greece and Serbia should she give up to Rumania the line of Tutrakan-Balchik." The answer came: "Bulgaria knows on what conditions, in attacking Greece and Serbia, she can be secured in the rear." To Austria's account, therefore, we must lay the second

Balkan War, and all that came of it. I quote in epitome, by way of further proof, the remarkable admission of M. Atanas Shopov, formerly Bulgarian Consul-General at Saloniea. He wrote in the *Mir* of January 21 (O.S.), 1914—

"From the beginning of the War in the Balkan Peninsula two politieal tendencies were at strife: the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance. The Entente favoured the Balkan Confederation; while the Triplice sought to compromise and ruin it, as being eontrary to its own interests. This latter policy prevailed in Bulgaria, where during the winter and spring of 1913 a very lively and astute agitation was carried on, not only among the Opposition, but in the Supreme Command as well as in the army at the front."

This appears to be the simple truth. Henee the second Balkan War has been termed a royal *coup d'état,* preparing even when Adrianople fell to Serbian valour. Men like Radoslavov refused the arbitration proposed by Russia. Ghenadiev, the heir of Stambulov, beeame a link between Ferdinand and the irresponsible Maeedonian Committee; all these three took their orders from Vienna.

Treachery began the assault on Greeks and Serbians, who replied with such vigour that Bulgaria lost the whole of her previous gains at the moment when Rumania moved her forces over the Danube and was sending them on to Sofia. Then, with piteous gestures, the Ministry which had insulted the Tsar's Government now on its knees implored his intervention. Russia's diplomacy saved the remnants of the stricken army, and persuaded the Rumanians to wait outside the Bulgarian capital so that an accommodation might be reached.

The Peace of Bucharest, in which Dr. Dillon played his part, could not satisfy any of the belligerents; but it delighted the Austrian heir-apparent, Franz Ferdinand. His organ, the *Reichspost* of Vienna, broke out in jubilant tones: "The world was ready to hand over the Balkans to Pan-Slavism as a spoil. By a single stroke all that is changed." It went on to explain—and we should grave the words in our memory—that "Latin Rumania with its brilliant future" had proved to be one hindrance; that another was "the granite block of Albania," which barred the paths of Serbian expansion towards the Adriatic; and that the "Slavonised Bul-

garians," just because they were not Slavonian enough, had been deprived of their leadership by their quondam allies. It concluded in a passage of deep significance: "The outcome of these Balkan quarrels presents no forbidding features to the Dual Monarchy or the German nation. The last war brought larger calamity to the Pan-Slavists than the first brought to Turkey. The bounds of that Slav dream are set for ever. In the Balkans it has defeated itself. Europe is free from a great danger; the Austro-Hungarian Empire from a menace which specially regards her."

But more remains behind. From the revelations of M. Take Jonescu, the celebrated Rumanian statesman, which were confirmed almost directly by Signor Giolitti, speaking in the Italian Parliament, it is beyond a doubt that Austria meditated war on Serbia during August 1913. The policy of the Ballplatz, in warning M. Jonescu as it did, was to hold Rumania sufficiently in check; and so Count Berchtold announced that "Austria-Hungary was ready to defend Bulgaria by force of arms." To San Giuliano, the Italian Foreign Minister, this proposal was described as a "preventive measure," which would constitute a *casus fœderis,* thereby entitling the Triplice to aid

and maintenance from the third partner in the Alliance. But even Signor Giolitti, whose pro-German sympathies were excessive, could not allow the Austrian argument. He replied to Count San Giuliano that such a war would not be a *casus fœderis,* but executed by Austria-Hungary on her own account. He said: "When no one thinks of attacking her she is not in a position of self-defence. You must convey this to Austria in the most formal way; and it is desirable that Germany should dissuade her from persisting in so highly dangerous an adventure."

What Germany did we are not likely to be told; but war was staved off yet a while. Bulgaria had broken with Slavdom and Russia; to her everlasting shame she had villainously set upon Greeks and Serbians, getting well beaten by them, and trampled on by Rumania. Her king became the Sultan's friend, although the Turks had calmly walked back into Adrianople and stayed there. But Serbia, beleaguered still by Austrian intrigues, not given an outlet on either side, yet in two heroic wars a conqueror, would surely not cease to struggle on her own behalf, and that of Slavdom. Her people were the vanguard of a movement ever

pressing on towards the West; they claimed Bosnia-Herzegovina; they signalled by public journalism, revolutionary societies, and their mere presence on the frontier, to the twenty-seven millions of Slavs held in bondage, frequently mishandled, by the German and Magyar minorities who ruled with unintelligent *hauteur* in Vienna and Buda-Pest.

Well might these Berchtolds, Tiszas, Fuerstenbergs, talk of a menace close at hand! It is not to be denied. The analogy between Piedmont in 1858-1860 and Serbia since 1910 is very striking. In both cases an armed champion, which could count on the sympathy of millions who thought themselves "unredeemed," was standing at the gates of the prison. Germans and Magyars would not conjure away the menace by giving their Croatians, Slovenes, Czechs, and the rest a genuine Home Rule. Ascendancy was the game; yes, even when "Trialism," with which Franz Ferdinand seemed to be coquetting, got its columns of advertisement in the newspapers. The "Drang nach Osten" never paused for a day. The Pan-German idea marched on. To annihilate Serbia, to bribe King Ferdinand with a scrap of Macedonia, to hustle the Greeks out of Salonica—these were steps foreseen, pre-

determined, in the moving programme to which Anatolia, scored through by the Baghdad Railway, gave pledge and prospect of success. Who could prevent it? There was only one Power strong enough to hinder a new-making of the world. Its name was Britain.

The vision of a Bulgarian soldier, Major Atanasov, published immediately after Austria-Hungary had declared war on Serbia, throws these anticipations into a golden light. I must abridge, but I cannot pass over its salient features. "When Russia comes to Serbia's help," said Atanasov, "the European War will break out. Two great Alliances and two small groups in the Balkans will rush into conflict. The action of England will be decisive. Now Sir Edward Grey has made it clear that England does not see eye to eye with Russia in the Balkan problems. Even in European questions England is only partially in accord with Russia and France. In Parliament Sir Edward has affirmed her independence of the Dual Alliance; she does not intend to support the Franco-Russian aspirations. Therefore she will remain neutral. In the fields of battle will be seen Russia, France, Rumania, Serbia, Greece arrayed on

one side; and the Triple Alliance with Bulgaria, Turkey, Sweden and Norway on the other. The second group will come out victorious. Turkey will assail southern Russia, the Scandinavians march on Petersburg, the Bulgarians fling themselves against Greeks and Serbs, the Albanians on Montenegro; and if need be, the Austro-Hungarians with ourselves will finish Rumania. Two great final campaigns will be fought: one near Odessa or Kieff, to overthrow the Russians; in the other the western German army, alone or combined with Italian forces, will execute a victorious march through France. In the naval actions following the Russian fleet will be destroyed in the Black Sea, the French by the German in the Atlantic; and the shores of France will be occupied by the triumphant Teutons."

A brave fantasy, this of the Bulgarian Major Atanasov! It may appear to us incredible that he, or any man, should picture England as a still watcher from Shakespeare's cliff while the Teutonic, Austro-Hungarian, Bulgaro-Turk expeditions were thus resistlessly overrunning the nations of Europe; but he was not alone in his misconception. It is repeated with studied gentleness in *Truth*

about Germany—that official manifesto to which Prince von Bülow, and Herr Ballin of the Hamburg-American line, set their names, with many others of like eminence. These meek-eyed disciples of Kultur say mournfully, "It was Germany's conviction that the sincerity of Britain's love for peace could be trusted."

How beautiful a thing is trust! Britain had a Liberal Cabinet pledged against aggression, as Major Atanasov rightly reports, with a passion for reducing naval and army estimates; it included a Sir Edward Grey, who could not imagine that there were wicked persons *in rerum natura* like Bernhardi, saying, "Our German people must be taught that the maintenance of peace never can or ought to be the goal of policy"; a Lord Haldane, whose spiritual home was on the banks of the Spree, and who believed that emulation of the better gifts was the very and only aim of Junkerdom; in short, it was a Cabinet which, on Mr. Lloyd George's solemn oath, did not and could not dream that war with Germany was possible. No wonder if Major Atanasov and all Bulgaria with him, as well as Europe at large, believed that the world might go to ruin, but Britain

would keep the peace. At any rate Germany so believed, and Austria too; and in that faith unfeigned they made up their minds, for reasons military, political, economic, and dynastic, in view of the approaching end of Francis Joseph, and the growing strength, yet more to grow, of the French army and the Russian artillery, that war with Slavdom should be started not later than August, 1914.

The evidence for this fact is cumulative and convincing. A pretext had to be found or made. The ways of Providence are mysterious. So are the practices of autocratic governments. On Sunday, June 28, 1914, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, with his morganatic wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg, was killed by a bomb and revolver shots in the streets of Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, by two young Bosnians named Cabrinovich and Princip. Chance or design had furnished the Cabinet of Vienna with the pretext required. . . . I state things as they appeared at the time to those who had been long intent on the gathering South-Eastern storm. Undesigned coincidences are always striking; and that preparations known to have been elaborately made, and warnings given in South Africa, in South America, in Canada, should

be followed at the strategic moment by a murder which would justify the most peaceful State in the severest measures, was a portent, divine or human, visible to the nations. Secret trials in camera do not elucidate mysteries of this complexion. The miscreant Cabrinovich was not a Serbian, although he had obtained the instrument of his crime in Belgrade. He was a Bosnian, and the Austrian police looked upon him before the murder as a harmless sort of youth. Moreover Princip, the other assassin, also a Bosnian, acknowledged himself to have been for years an anarchist. Finally, the annexation in 1908 of the two provinces had brought odium on the Archduke, who was believed to have encouraged Aerenthal, or even to have set him on doing it.

These allegations might seem to cast no shadow of blame on the Belgrade Government, as truly, from that day to this, and although the Serbian archives fell later into Austrian hands, the foul deed has never been brought home to them by one shred of evidence. But the general connection of "Greater Serbian" schemes with this particular infamy was taken for granted. Sarajevo became "the city of the Great War." In an English trial

for high treason the accused, as we saw when Sir Roger Casement was tried in London, would have the most able counsel to defend him, and cross-examination would probe the weak points of the indictment. Now the Serbian Government was on its trial, but before an Austrian court, where it could not get a hearing and could not cross-examine. What matter? superior power had allowed the undesigned coincidence. On July 27 a foreign diplomatist said to Dr. Dillon, who was then in Paris, "The German Emperor thinks the moment has come to strike a decisive blow." Mr. F. S. Oliver relates that on the margin of a document concerning the French and German preparations for war, supplied to him by a military friend at the end of July 1913, these observations, among others, were written: "N.B. Most important. The German Bill takes immediate effect. The French only takes effect in 1916. . . . A year from now will be the critical time." To the day it proved so.

CHAPTER XII

Belgium saves Europe

WHEN the Austrian Cabinet launched its ultimatum, like a torpedo, at Serbia, on July 23, 1914, it was aiming to destroy a greater thing—the independence and the conscience of Europe, bound in one. This was the felony for which the House of Habsburg must pay forfeit. Let us make our contention plain. In a powerful article from the pen of Signor Corradini, who created the National Italian party, and who leads it with singular ability, I read, "Delenda est Austria" ("Of Austria there must be an end"). The word is very sad in our hearing, on grounds not a few; yet when the headsman utters, "This I pronounce for doom," how can we gainsay him? Austria received from Providence, as long ago was pointed out, the task of reconciling German, Slav, and Magyar in defence of Christendom against the unspeakable Turk. This magnificent knighthood Magyar and German have now sold in

exchange for their idle, showy, unjust, and essentially cruel exploiting of the patient Slav —their beast of burden, their packhorse, their scorn and sport and tribute-bearer during so many ages. The Apostolic crown of Hungary has been a pretence, the Imperial Roman a mockery. Entrenched in the heart of Europe, they have divided the nations which they misgoverned. And the Holy See may well rebuke the successor of St. Stephen for his aid and support of the Turkish power, which holds in durance Jerusalem and Nazareth.

At long last, beaten times without number, and now smitten to servitude by aspiring Hohenzollern, these Habsburgs make themselves the base instruments of a Power that uses, despises, and will cheat them, when they have served as its catspaw in the business of pulling Eastern chestnuts out of a roaring fire. What shame could be greater than the shame of Austria? But yet, "audi facinus majoris abollæ," listen to their most atrocious crime. They have loved and made a lie—the lie of an ultimatum to Serbia, whose terms, though fulfilled, they were resolute not to accept; while they knew, with crystalline clearness, that if Russia demurred to it, the whole of Europe would be flung into the seething

cauldron where the nations, their men, riches, subsistence, and the very land that bore them, are all melting in a horrible conflict and confusion. It was Austria that began this devil's dance; and Austria, which is the House of Habsburg, should be handed over to the executioner. It is a righteous doom which Signor Corradini has registered, after the Allies had spoken it.

I come back to the menaced independence of Europe, and to its conscience, already in danger. These were the great issues at stake in July 1914; not Serbia, whose complicity in the death of Franz Ferdinand, were it proved, could have been fitly punished without setting the world on fire. As Dr. Dillon reported on July 24, after the ultimatum had been dispatched, "No statesman in either half of the Empire holds King Peter's Government responsible for this revolting crime." The real question, he went on to point out, was one of pure force; should Serbia break up the Dual Monarchy, or Austria, by imposing its will at Belgrade, put an end to the Slav peril in that direction. Serbia, like Bulgaria, held a key position; hence the importance of both. However, Vienna wanted more—to be paramount in the Balkans and get down to Salo-

nica. The ultimatum, then, made a feint of unreal language; and Europe, for a crowded week, from July 23 to July 31, 1914—the judgment week of the old order of things—held its "World's Debate" in a misleading form, as our Courts used to hear arguments about fictitious persons, John a Nokes and John a Stiles, by way of deciding vital matters of fortunes and estates.

Hence came the defeat which Prussian chicanery was able to inflict on Sir Edward Grey, and thus to start the War on terms most favourable to Germany. Out of this net thrown over his head the British diplomatist never got himself free. That England would not defend Serbia he declared immediately; and that he was concerned only to preserve the general peace. But how? By proposing a Conference of the four friendly but neutral Powers—Britain, France, Italy, and Germany. This was not only to invite, but to secure, checkmate against his own side. The Kaiser could always evade a Conference; and he did so by merely marking time. It was the hour when England's decision was called for. England would not decide.

England waited, while Russia by the mouth of M. Sazonov, and France by the cogent

representations of MM. Cambon in London and Berlin, showed with admirable lucidity that "Austria's conduct was immoral and provocative"; that "she would never have taken such action had not Germany first been consulted"; that these things amounted to a virtual state of war, in which France would fulfil all the obligations entailed by her alliance with Russia;—and now, what did England mean to do? Sir G. Buchanan replied at Petersburg that we had "no direct interests in Serbia." M. Sazonov repeated with equal patience and insistence that it was not a Serbian question except in show; the Great War was at the doors. Still the correspondence rolled forward on John a Nokes and John a Stiles. The attitude of Britain was benevolent and negative; Sir Edward Grey continued, as he loved to do, his "temperate language," while war came down in a furious whirlwind. What did it all mean?

It meant that a Liberal-Socialist Cabinet was saying, like Mr. W. J. Bryan at Washington later, "There will be no war so long as I am in office; I do not want it; therefore it shall not be." Sir Edward Grey wrote as the Cabinet ordered. Alliance there was none compelling us to defend France; but, as we

had in effect sent her fleet away to the Mediterranean, we pledged ourselves, when hostilities were on the point of breaking out, to protect her northern shores from an attack by Germany. Closer than that we would not go to realities, lest they should dissipate our dream of peace with a thunderclap. Never was a British Cabinet more innocent of offence towards its neighbour. But the neighbour was Attila.

"Germany strikes," said Lord Roberts to a sneering world, "when Germany's hour has struck." Now was the hour, fixed according to good evidence, as we have learnt, at least a year previously; but almost chosen by the unfortunate victims themselves—their affairs in confusion, their preparations not made or far from complete, while England hung back on Quaker principles, and her politicians had been hurried by strikes, suffragettes, Ulster, and the rumours of civil war in Ireland, from crisis to crisis, none of which did they seem able to master. France, even to her best friends, offered a disquieting spectacle. Her Government was in commission. The President and Prime Minister were reviewing Russian troops in Petersburg, with workmen's strikes, engineered from the quarter

we know, growling behind them, on the 23rd of July, when the Austrian ultimatum was delivered at Belgrade. Had Mr. Asquith instructed Sir Edward Grey to tell the Kaiser plainly that England meant peace to be kept; and that, if it were broken, she would do as in fact she did on the 4th of August immediately following, she would have acted in her old spirit, not without happier consequences than were inevitable when a great nation looks on while its elected ministers play at blindman's buff.

Sir Edward Grey's toned-down language made on the Kaiser just such an impression as men not so invincibly innocent would have predicted. He judged that England, having jogged along one mile, might be led to travel twain on the road of benevolent, that is to say, pro-German neutrality. Kicking aside Serbia with Sarajevo, which had helped him thus far, he ventured on, not one but several, "infamous proposals." Would his beloved British stand aside while he shattered France and appropriated her colonies? Would they let his armies pass through Belgium, whose integrity, after he had used her roads and railways, should be assured her, and good passage-money be promised her? No critic,

however severe, has charged the Liberal Cabinet of July 1914 with high crimes and misdemeanours. They answered like English gentlemen, but in words too mild, and still hugging their neutrality, their "freedom of action." Speaking off book, Sir Edward at last warned the charming Prince Lichnowski that, if France were attacked, the Kaiser would do well not to reckon on Britain's folded arms. It is a proof how little the Germans feared this pacific Government that so gentle a caution should have flashed into the Prince's eyes a wonder never felt before. But this alarming view, though telegraphed to the Wilhelmstrasse, never reached the Kaiser. He put a deadly question in Paris; he sent, on July 31, an ultimatum to his friend the Tsar. And on August 1 he declared war against Russia.

But even on that day of August the Cabinet refused to make common cause with France. Posterity will not believe it. Britain, as represented by her Government, was suffering from an agony of indecision. The Stock Exchange was closed; the Bank rate went up to 10 per cent.; and people have talked ever since of that August "Black Saturday." In comparison with what might have been, had the Cabinet gone on debating but not concluding,

these financial earthquakes were of no account. Like the Admiralty, our then Government was "organised for peace." It had no military sense whatever, any more than it had an Imperial outlook. It was a meeting of Town Councillors presiding in the House of Commons. By rare good fortune the Tory leaders in London, Mr. Balfour and Mr. Bonar Law, translated the European peril in terms of a message that signified, "If you will not declare war on behalf of France and Belgium, we will turn you out." The spell was broken. But something grander than party manœuvres now rose upon the scene, dazzling mankind with light of another sphere. While Britain was hesitating to save Europe, the little nation of Belgium stood forth in defence of its honour and independence. Serbia was not to be the champion. Belgium faced Germany.

Belgium, a Catholic country, modern and democratic, with a King and a Constitution, "Le roi, la loi, la liberté," drew the eyes of Europe from the Danube towards its historic battlefields, where the World's Debate had been, over and over again, decided. To persist in my metaphor of light, suddenly a rift appeared in the war-clouds; the heavens broke open to their highest; and we were gazing

into fathomless depths of ether. The South-Eastern problem dropped out of sight for England; we had discovered where our duty called us. To begin a European conflict because Serbia had provoked Austria-Hungary, and was likely to undergo penalties brought on her head by guilty deeds, would never have been allowed by the British Parliament or people. Yet such seemed to be the problem, so long as Vienna kept hammering at retribution for the crime of Serajevo. Besides, it can unhappily never be forgotten that tragedies of an Oriental ferocity had cast a gloom over the Konak of Belgrade; and that, in consequence, Serbia with its Court lay for years excommunicate from the West. The claims and rights of Belgium were perfect before the Law of Nations. Some Divine Power might have kept her in reserve—and why not boldly say that so it was?—for the clear demonstration of justice and of the Allied cause, which, after all, was free from deceit and ambition, as the wide range of documents now accessible proves convincingly. Belgium, then, was a test and crucial experiment, simple as the elements of law and fact on which its defence rested. The "matter of Britain" could at once be taken

out of sophistical peace-wranglings. Even the Cabinet saw its way to a decision.

The case was this. By treaties of 1839 and 1870, to which all the Great Powers, including Prussia, had set their hands, the Belgian kingdom enjoyed perpetual neutrality. The obligation laid upon Europe was never to violate this zone of peace; while on the Belgians it was incumbent to protect their bounds from foreign intrusion with all their resources. France had no temptation to invade a country serving thus, after the manner of a bastion, where she lay exposed to attack from Germany. But the German General Staff, on *their* principles, took the opposite view; and, as may be read in Bernhardi's volume on *The Next War,* they laid their plans accordingly. Moreover, great strategic railways had been carried up to the Belgian frontier, which could have no other purpose than the transport of men and munitions on a vast scale in the direction of Liége. These things were manifest to all men. Warnings, too, came, though inconveniently late, which led to a secret session of Parliament and the introduction of national service, little as democracy in Belgium favoured it. Of this situation Dr. Sarolea, whose knowledge is derived at first

hand from the authorities, will furnish the most persuasive summary. Nothing can be more certain than that the Belgian Government, and his Majesty King Albert, had but one desire: to be left in their neutrality by all the belligerents.

And, as I said, France could only wish the same. Her defences on that side resembled, from the nature of the country, fortifications on a billiard table. Great Britain had an overpowering interest in Antwerp (and, if she had known it, in Zeebrügge, the insignificant port of Bruges); but she would best secure it by the absolute exemption of that great mart and trade-centre from the storms of war. So true is this reflection that not until months had passed did it occur to the German factory of fiction to bring against this country the charge of intending somehow to occupy Belgian territory. Such lies are like the father that begot them, gross Falstaffian inventions. Had the Prussian Chancellor dreamt of anything similar, he would never, on July 29, 1914, have proposed to Sir Edward Bunsen by England's good leave to march German hosts through Belgium into France. This one observation disposes of the stories, fabri-

cated too late, of Belgian conspiracies against the Kaiser with perfidious Albion.

We will now look into the general situation more closely, as its drift and logic were summed up by Sir Edward Grey in dispatches on July 29 and 30, when Britain's negative was changing under stress of events to a categorical affirmative, and the future of all nations was determined. From these resolutely simple documents we gather as follows. The problem of war and peace offered two aspects, an Eastern and a Western, Germany being the assailant on both fronts. The Eastern question had become a dispute between Austria and Serbia, leading up to the larger one of Teuton against Slav, each intent on winning supremacy in the Balkans. Great Britain would take a hand in neither. But the Western concerned Germany and France. What then? Sir Edward wrote to Sir F. Bertie in Paris these remarkable words: "If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider. . . . We were free from engagements, and we should have to decide what British interests required us to do." Astonishing! For ever since King

Edward's journeyings on the errand of ending our splendid isolation, this question was staring the successive British Premiers in the face.

But while Sir Edward in London was "considering," the German Chancellor, "just returned from Potsdam," was helping him and his colleagues to "make up their minds." What Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, the Kaiser's mouthpiece, proposed that same evening, the 29th, and how it was welcomed by the British Ministry, we read in Sir Edward's reply of July 30 to Sir E. Goschen. Would England stand aside, while French colonies were taken, and France was beaten but not farther dismembered? Would we bargain away "whatever obligations or interest we had as regarded the neutrality of Belgium"? Would we bind ourselves to Germany by a "general agreement" to be neutral ourselves?

These were the Kaiser's requisitions. They spared us the insult—and that is curiously characteristic on both sides—of hinting at an equivalent for our betrayal of Europe. But the German Chancellor was so—shall I say obtuse or adroit?—as to inquire if we should continue to be neutral, while he was in the very act of violating neutrality. Sir Edward Grey answered, not by publishing these "in-

famous proposals" to the world, as Pitt or Palmerston would have done, but in a mild, though firm staccato. "It would be a disgrace to us," he wrote, "to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good fame of this country would never recover." And "we could not entertain that bargain either," by which Belgium should be left to its fate. We could not tie our hands by a "future general neutrality." But if Germany would work with us to preserve the peace of Europe, Sir Edward Grey declared that he would "promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately." Thus far the voice of England spoke, of that England

> "Whose white investments figure innocence,
> The dove and very blessed spirit of peace."

But they prove it also. I stake the defence of the Allies on Sir Edward Grey's transparent candour, which showed to the fire-eaters of the German General Staff how little an attack was contemplated on the Fatherland which they have since delivered over to blood and ruin. Still, though Britain's Foreign Secretary

had gently waved aside their ruffian demands, they concluded that so good a Christian would never fight; and they fixed a term for the invasion of Belgium. The hundred threads of intrigue and preparation had run together into this enterprise, so facile and prompt, as they believed, of execution, giving them a short cut into the heart of France and an easy road to Paris. The War would be over in seven weeks, about as long as the campaign which subdued Austria, July-August 1866. These were the confident anticipations of Berlin.

The last day of July 1914, and of the old Europe we have known, dawned in clear sunshine. But England's heart was moved, and the heart of her people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. On the war-anvil Thor's hammer struck until it rang again. Germans, Russians, French, were on march in myriads to the frontiers. *Krieg-mobil* was everywhere in those lands the order of the day. I have already mentioned the German ultimatum to the Tsar. Still Sir Edward flew his doves of peace all round, but kept his hands free. Offers from Berlin to guarantee (oh, soothing word!) the integrity of France and her colonies were the last gestures of that

hypnotism which longed to keep Britain in her magic sleep. On Saturday evening, about five p.m., Germany declared war on Russia.

The throbbing nerve of the situation was now Belgium. Our unwearied Secretary had asked for assurances from France and Prussia that they would respect its sacred character. France gave hers at once; the Prussian Secretary, Von Jagow, must consult his master. Then, on the system of double entry familiar to us from instances already cited, the Minister of Germany at Brussels was reiterating on Sunday, August 2, his pledge that the Belgian Government need fear no violence, while an ultimatum was flying towards him, which he delivered with shame a couple of hours later, requiring that Belgium should "cease to be a nation and become a thoroughfare." If she refused, war with its consequences would follow without delay. "The choice laid on Belgium," I wrote in January 1915, "was to lose her independence, or to join in a treacherous side-blow at France, which would mean that country's downfall. And Belgium stood alone. Her attitude was heroic, for her decision was instantly taken. From that moment the German General Staff condemned her to death by burning. . . . Belgium would not unlock

her gates; they must be forced open. The cannon thundering against Liége announced that the greatest crime of modern history had entered on its first hour."

King Albert appealed on Monday, August 3, to Great Britain as signatory of the Treaties of 1839 and 1870, to "safeguard the integrity of Belgium." Alas! we were not ready; but we could respect our plighted word. Historical scenes followed in the British Parliament. Any large prophetic vision of the European crisis and all it held of revolution, of new creation, was not to be expected in the House of Commons; but a certain practical sense, and loyalty to our engagements, bound these afternoons to the splendid and stately times of the Long Parliament.

For it was the same dispute, carried beyond our shores to a world lying in thought and manners far from us. Instead of the inviolable Five Members a nation craved its rights at the hands of this High Court. A greater than Charles I by number of subjects, wealth stored up, armies raised and trained, fleets called into being, diplomacy world-wide, and spies ubiquitous, came to fetch his victims with a truculent band of incendiaries, woman-ravishers, priest-slayers—the "Furious Host"

riding to victory; and he was met by a calm statement in the Commons' House of Britain. Her Fleet alone was ready; it had begun its watch in the North Sea. The riddle of the sands would now receive its solution. Belgium had cleared the air. For autocracy, calling itself necessity, knew no law.

"Phrases," I said in the article from which I have borrowed, "soon to become immortal, were trembling on the lips of Prussian ministers—'a scrap of paper,' 'time is our asset,' 'necessity has no law,' 'we must hack our way through.'" And the confession is on record, as in enduring granite, which on August 4, 1914, the Chancellor made: "Our troops have occupied Luxemburg, and perhaps [but he knew it] are already on Belgian soil. Meine Herren, that is contrary to the dictates of International Law. . . . We knew, however, that France stood ready for the invasion [this the speaker did not know, for it was not true]. France could wait, but we could not wait . . . so we were compelled to override the just protest of the Luxemburg and Belgian Governments. The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached."

This was Charles I, muttering in his cloak an apology for invading the Commons, his armed gang at the doors, while the members rounded in his ears, "Privilege, privilege!" To-day, May 5, 1917, I read that after discussion in the Reichstag the German Government proposes to break up Belgium (whose motto is, *L'union fait la force*) into Flemish and Walloon, province against province, but with a Prussian general to hold them well in hand. As King Albert would not put his country up to auction, it is to be sold in lots. The methods of autocracy are indeed convincing.

But by her sheer and simple heroism Belgium had saved the conscience of Europe. She would save its independence also, as events were about to prove in the face of an astonished and admiring world.

On Tuesday, August the Fourth—a day, as we have seen, memorable in the French annals of 1789—England despatched to Berlin an ultimatum, the object of which was to secure the Belgian kingdom from German attack. It was too late. At seven o'clock Sir E. Goschen received his passports. At midnight, Berlin time, our war began. The guardian of the freedom of Europe had been compelled

by Belgium's loyalty to her pledges, and by Germany's disregard of her honour, to take up arms against the House of Hohenzollern. Not Shakespeare himself could have devised a more perfect situation, or have kept the respective characters so true to themselves.

CHAPTER XIII

The Triumph of "Kultur"

NOTHING is so difficult to subdue," said Aristotle, "as injustice in arms." Kultur, or mechanism made perfect, was now to give the world assurance of a man—of millions of men—turned out by its training on Belgium and Europe. "Time is the German asset," replied Herr von Jagow, when Sir E. Goschen implored him in England's name to respect Prussia's own sacred word. And the Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, called the treaty which guaranteed Belgian neutrality "a scrap of paper"—the winged word that flew round Europe, and is flying still. Injustice, armed as never before, crying out that it could not spare the time to be just, fell upon Liége, and on August 20, 1914, entered Brussels in triumph. The Prussian Guard, marching with its high and ridiculous "goose-step," went up by the Cathedral of Ste.-Gudule, along by the Place Royale, and so to the park and palace—looking tran-

quillity itself under the bright heavens—from which a hurricane of fire over the land had forced King Albert to withdraw. Europe felt the wound to its honour. It could not protect Belgium. And we, who remembered delightful days in the fair city and the royal park, were desolate. Now was the second half of Aristotle's denunciation to be fulfilled. All the world should see how the nation that abused its "prudence and valour" would be "the most wicked, the most cruel, the most lustful, and most gluttonous being imaginable."

A new word rang through the air, *Schrecklichkeit*. It was the German equivalent of a French Convention formula, "Terror the order of the day." My first suspicion of the coming portent was stirred by the brutal handling of Tirlemont, a place dear to friends of mine, and associated in my wanderings with flowers in bloom. But soon we had to recite a chaplet of sorrow—the rosary which, beginning with Liége, took in Visé, Aerschot, Termonde, Louvain, Malines, Dinant, Roulers, Courtrai, Ypres. To them we added Alost, Lierre, Mons, Namur. Such was the object-lesson in burning, pillage, slaughter, rape, and havoc, with details not to be uttered, given deliberately and with scientific precision, by the German

invaders, to every people under heaven. The "War-Book" ordered it: "A war conducted with energy cannot be directed merely against the combatants of the Enemy State, and the positions they occupy. It will and must seek to destroy the total moral and material resources of that State."

Thus Von Moltke: "All should be attacked —not the military alone, but finances, railways, means of subsistence, even the prestige of the enemy's Government." And Bismarck: "The nation must be sickened of the war. Leave them nothing but their eyes to weep with." When the grim Chancellor was entreated not to starve Paris into surrender, he laughed the proposal to scorn, and said: "I wonder that any of the pretty French babies are still alive inside the lines." The "War-Book" too smiles at any one who should try to put the brake on "the unrestricted and reckless application of all the available means for the conduct of hostilities." There is no such thing as a "law of war"; there is only "fear of reprisals." Most certain it is, after a thousand days of horror, that not accident but policy made the Germans in Belgium "stable their horses in churches, destroy municipal buildings, defile the hearth, and bombard cathedrals." Body

and soul, the people were to be broken. Nameless outrages, reported but impossible of description, with incendiarism repeated from end to end of this brave, this devastated country, were done by command. "As our princes tell us, so we do," said Heine. The Kaiser violated, burnt, and ruined Belgium, like some monstrous Hindu god with ten thousand arms, each bearing a lighted brand. He, as if alone, as if omnipotent.

The fate of Louvain shocked humanity. Then the whole of Belgium seemed to be wrapt in a fiery cloud. Next the hail of projectiles struck beautiful Rheims; and its cathedral, the French Westminster Abbey, was ruthlessly dealt with like a great lady whom a band of drunken ruffians had seized and stripped. As the country and its treasures, so the people. For months the system of terror went on, leaving no humiliation of defenceless men, women, and children untried. Seven millions of Belgians would have starved to death if English and American relief had not come between them and famine. On the fall of Antwerp at least half a million fled across the border into Holland. We sheltered in this country more than one hundred thousand homeless fugitives, many of whom had seen

their towns and villages set on fire with inflammable disks and grenades by the German soldiery.

These things were not freaks of violence; and the writers who at that time apologised for the General Staff as unable to prevent them, may now read—with remorse, I hope, as they read—the instructions issued to regiments falling baek in France on the Hindenburg line, that they should utterly make a desert of the country they are giving up. How scrupulously the work has been carried into effect, our advancing troops bear witness. No German authority dreams of apologising for it. Belgium in 1914, and France in 1917, show the consistent logic of destruction, applied to everything in the doomed area, which is Germany's rule in war. It spares neither the past nor the present; and, so far as in it lies, there shall be no future possible where it has been compelled to loosen its grip. Such is Kultur in action, an armed and aggressive doetrine. The German "War-Book" is the only Bible it recognises.

A "doctrine of devils;" to which the strongest human motives have added poisonous flames. For Belgium, by three weeks of resistance, had thrown the Prussian plan out of gear,

allowed time for a British expedition to land on the coast of France, and shown that the Germans, though each might be "fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell," were not invincible. Belgium was conquered up to the sands of Dunkirk; its hero-king had but a margin by the sea to call his own. But in the fourth week of August French and British troops, though hard beset, and the French badly beaten at Charleroi, were fighting the immortal rearward action to be known in history as the glorious Retreat from Mons. The War, said experts in strategy, long ere its thunder broke into fire-floods, cannot be a long one; Europe has no reserves of force equal to those lengthy, dawdling campaigns of old time. It will be decided in the West; and about a month will see the battles over which must determine the issue. At Berlin the General Staff held pretty much an identical view; and the Seven Weeks of 1866 were freely cited.

Now let us reckon how many days elapsed between July 23, when Count Berchtold sent that arrogant, false ultimatum to Belgrade, and September 10, when the Battles of the Marne were ending. The number is forty-nine, just seven weeks. Nothing, it seemed at first, could stop the "march of the Huns."

On their way the north-eastern fortresses of France fell as at the sound of a rushing, mighty wind. Our little army, under General French, fought heroically day and night from August 23; but still, at the word of General Joffre, it kept on retreating. The modern Huns swept forward in the track of Attila (June 451), whom the Kaiser had taken as his model, and of whom we read that he "sacked most of the cities in Belgic Gaul." Over the "Catalaunian fields," or plains of Champagne, they drove ahead, until they reached Meaux, within twenty miles of Paris, and the booming of their great guns could be heard in the suburbs at Vincennes. On September 3 the Government transferred itself to Bordeaux. Nearly one million people, it is said, left the Capital, and we were resigning our minds to its fall. In imagination we saw the Prussian Uhlans riding along once more past the Arc de Triomphe and the Champs Elysées into the Place de la Concorde. On that same day in Rome a new pope was elected, who took the name of Benedict XV, and to whose coming reign legend attached the prophetic words, "Religio depopulata," or "Religion laid waste." They were to have striking fulfilment; but the Huns would not enter Paris.

For now General von Kluck made his turning move south-east before the French lines. General Joffre called up his Sixth Army; General French, not annihilated, smote rudely on the Germans at hand; the second decisive Battle of the "Catalaunian fields" began on Sunday, September 6, and spread over one hundred miles. That ancient first battle against Attila (June 25, 451), says the historian Jornandes, was "fierce, various, obstinate, and bloody, without parallel in past ages; he that saw not this wonder had seen nothing." But the second eclipsed all hitherto fought, not so much in magnitude as in consequences. It lasted with vicissitudes during four clear days, of which September 8—the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity—beheld the German right defeated and falling back under pressure of the English and French combined. Next day, the 9th, brought high winds, drenching rains, and the critical moment of the whole war. It ended in our favour. On Thursday, September 10, 1914, "the battle of the Marne had to all intents been won by the Allies, and the engagement became a drive."

By Saturday the 12th the Germans were taking shelter in the entrenched positions on the Aisne which they had previously got ready.

Their forward movement came to an end. The new line was one of the strongest defences in Europe. But the Great Offensive had been met and broken. The thing which German strategists, bred on Moltke's principles, dreaded more than all, was now to be their portion—the parallel battle in the trenches from the borders of Switzerland to the North Sea. The Polish Jew of Warsaw, J. S. Bloch, had so far back as 1898 described such a "line of battle in the earth"; he predicted quite accurately that the "breaking of frontier defences," an operation hitherto unknown, would be required in the war of the future; and that to do it "without a whole series of battles is inconceivable." He concluded that there would be no conclusion, but a stalemate. This, after nearly three years of fighting on the French, Italian, Turkish, and Russian fronts, remains to be seen. But when the Allies and the Germans had raced on till both armies were halted on the edge of the North Sea, neither outflanking the other, it became clear that, by losing the battle of the Marne, his Majesty Kaiser Wilhelm had lost all chance of winning the War. Time, I say, which had been the German asset, passed over thereupon to the Allies; they could marshal

and employ their inexhaustible resources, while the Central Empires underwent a gradually tightening blockade by land as well as by sea. From henceforth autocracy stood at bay; the King's Evil was fighting as a forlorn hope in its last defences. Few, perhaps, realised that the experts were justified, and that the outcome of the War, however long it might be, was already certain.

I borrow from Goethe the phrase and fact of "elective affinities." They exist between nations no less than individuals; and now they were making their influence more and more felt. Free men drew close to free men—slave-States to slave-States. Of the great free alliance, it was naturally the Commonwealths of the British Empire that set the example. They rallied to the Mother Country—Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders; South Africa was grateful and passionately loyal; India broke into a fever of enthusiasm for the British Raj, whose Emperor and Empress it had beheld on lofty thrones at Delhi. The British Islands were united as never before. On August 3, when the die was cast, Mr. John Redmond, rising in Parliament as his country's leader, held out the right hand of friendship to England. It was heartily taken.

But a timid Cabinet, which had little if any sense of what the Irish people could do beyond the walls of that House, throughout the Empire and in the United States, left Home Rule a dead letter on the Statute-Book. In due time the ministers would reap their reward in blood and fire—the rising of Eastertide 1916, the conflagration of Dublin's finest street, and the fierce hatred of "Sinn Fein," bringing down with a crash all that Nationalists and Liberals had patiently built up.

In September 1914 the fair dream of reconciliation smiled on us all. And Irish soldiers, Irish regiments outdid and distanced the traditional fame of their reckless daring. General French was an Irishman; the splendours of the Irish Guards during the retreat from Mons and in the battles of the Marne took all eyes. By and by the Irish at Gallipoli, with their Australian kinsfolk, became a world's wonder for boldness and endurance. What was it that cast an evil spell over these most rare achievements and the country to which they were due? It was the survival termed "Ascendancy," which is nothing else than a kind of Junkerdom, flourishing in Ireland still because Dublin Castle remains its last trench.

I cannot pursue the subject. A mightier voice than that of any private writer or speaker would give it resonance before the War was done. We shall hear that voice in the next chapter.

Among the nations abroad, Italy was unclasping, link by link, the fetters of the Triplice, and would join her true Allies at an anxious moment in 1915. She had reft Tripoli from Turkey by force of arms; her enemy at all times was Austria. The Cabinet of Rumania would be guided by Italy. Our ancient friendship with Portugal secured that Republic. We could not expect Holland or the Scandinavian Powers to join us. The Greeks loved freedom, but their royal house, bound by ties of blood to the Kaiser, would never give M. Venizelos a chance to lead the nation. And the mind of Bulgaria, which Ferdinand of Orleans ruled, we know well from disclosures, official and private, was in favour of alliance with Vienna. When Turkey, after exhausting the patience of our ambassador, sold herself to the Kaiser, not for any exorbitant price, Bulgaria's position was like that of a director on a financial board who has the casting-vote in his pocket. She stood between East and West—neutral, but calling out, "What offers?" She could supply

the missing section of the Orient line from Berlin to Constantinople and on to Baghdad. To complete the chain, or to leave it hanging loose in two parts, lay within her choice. For months her parrot-cry to the West was, "Macedonia, give me Macedonia." The West, so we believed, would have made a present to Sofia, as the Serbians cried out bitterly, of what did not belong to them, if King Ferdinand would but come in. Nevertheless, no bargain was struck by Sir Edward Grey. He was not the kind of man to deal with "King Fox." To those who have looked sharply into the "aspirations of Bulgaria" there can seem little question that, once Macedonia had been surrendered, the *ci-devant* Austrian officer would have kept, not his word but his prize, and held out a trusty hand to Vienna on one side, to Stamboul on the other. When chaffering was in vain, he declared against the Allies.

Belgium offers a fine contrast to Bulgaria. Chosen by the Power which was guiding men through storm and suffering on the upward way, Belgium, as the moral centre of the World's Debate, shone with increasing lustre. She had the rare felicity of possessing a king who was of heroic mould, and a cardinal who

was at once a patriot, a scholar, and a saint. These are lofty terms; but none less exalted will describe a tragic situation where these illustrious actors lived so grandly up to the parts assigned them. I have now, for the purpose of this argument, to quote the very words of King Albert's immortal reply to the aggressor: "The attack on her independence with which the German Government threatens Belgium, would constitute a flagrant violation of the Law of Nations. No strategic interest can justify the violation of Right. If the Belgian Government accepted the proposals which have been notified to it, it would sacrifice the nation's honour and betray its duties towards Europe." Such was the Royal defiance to iniquity.

Amid growing horror, civilised peoples had been taught, as I described it in the *Dublin Review* of January 1915, the "Lesson of Louvain." It showed them German Kultur doing its work of perfect mechanism, with a heart as hard as the rock from which it was hewn. Another lesson, and of a nobler cast, awaited the invaders themselves. Motley, the American historian, writing on *The Rise of the Dutch Republic,* has these words: "Peaceful in their pursuits, phlegmatic by temperament,

the Netherlanders were yet the most belligerent and excitable population of Europe." On both sides of the Scheldt that witness remains true. The Belgians would not give in. Though Liége, Namur, Brussels, and Antwerp had fallen; though Ghent, and Bruges, and Ostend were in the enemy possession; though in combats without ceasing, against formidable odds, the Belgian Army had poured out its blood on the stricken field until more than half of its men were killed, wounded, or taken, the remnant fought down to the shores of the sea undaunted. King Albert raised and equipped a second host which, by the side of our soldiers, won glory in the victories of the Yser, Ypres, and Calais. The King's "unconquerable soul," as he led his troops to the long campaigns where a foe was driving at them in rage and hate, but always found them steady as of old, inspired poets and draughtsmen, stirred the admiration of distant America, made of the Belgian flag the banner of freedom. Here was a King indeed.

With him stood forward the Cardinal, a figure not less heroic. When Gibbon is telling how Attila, ravaging Gaul in 451, laid siege to Orleans, he dwells on "the pastoral dili-

gence of Anianus, a bishop of primitive sanctity and consummate prudence," who "exhausted every art of religious policy to support their courage till the arrival of the expected succours." In Cardinal Mercier we shall not seek any politic art except a manly firmness; but, allowing for the Gibbonian style, these words, while describing the ancient prelate who saved Orleans, may be well adapted to this undoubtedly great man in the like circumstances. He could not, it is true, protect Malines, his primatial See, or its imposing Cathedral, from the modern hordes. They burnt and slew all round, as they would. But Cardinal Mercier stayed among his people, and was not to be removed. He became the voice of Belgium. He spoke as the Catholic Faith guided him to speak. And he smote Kultur with his pastoral staff in the sight of the world.

We who had seen and heard him at Canterbury, in 1897, when we were celebrating the seventh centenary of St. Augustine's landing at Ebbsfleet, knew what manner of man he was. The Cardinal did, indeed, journey to Rome in the last days of the sorrowful month of August 1914, just after Louvain had passed through the fire. The late Pope, Pius X, was dead.

He expired on August 20, the day when the Germans entered Brussels; and grief at the coming on of war which Austria would not delay at his bidding hastened the saintly old man's death. When Benedict XV was elected the Cardinal went back to his flock and his prison. With New Year the storm burst on him. In answer to questions from his clergy the Primate of Belgium sent out a charge so clear and telling that the German authorities "tore up the Pastoral, fined the printer, and put the highest ecclesiastic in the land under a guard." The Kaiser would have deported him to Germany, as he did M. Max, the burgomaster of Brussels, had not men of all creeds and parties uttered their protest. Rome was deeply indignant; the Holy Father made ready to act. Then the German Emperor denied all his satellites had done. It was a Christian principle to avoid bloodshed; "whatever might lead even indirectly to agitations and risings," he observed to the Vatican, "would necessitate severe measures on the part of the (German) army." This warning, if we translate it into plain language, threatened rapine and slaughter unless the Cardinal kept silence. But he has never kept silence when duty

called; and his Pastorals have given Belgium new courage, while they are circulated on both sides of the Atlantic, and admired wherever they are read.

I gave my view of the episode on February 12, 1915, and will ask leave to quote its conclusion here. (*Catholic Times,* "The Unjust Aggressor in Belgium.")

"Yes," I wrote, "Cardinal Mercier has committed an unpardonable crime. He said to the invader: 'You have robbed, plundered, murdered, committed sacrilege; but all these things, for which I give you chapter and verse, do not make you liege lord of Belgium.' To the people he said: 'Be still; your King commands it. Leave the fighting to our army and our allies. But remember that you are not subjects of any sovereign, or bound by any Constitution, except your own. To the enemy you owe nothing. Look forward. Belgium will be free once more.' These noble words have won the battle of right by their mere enunciation. They reduced the German forces, military, judicial, imperial, to the moral impotence of an earthquake or a breaking of the dykes. Teutons might storm, lay waste, set the world ablaze;

what had all that violence to do with the rights of the nation settled in its own land? A soldier suppresses the Pastoral, interns the Primate. Has he any right to do either? Right, none at all; a strong hand, with howitzers and other weapons of death, we see that he has. The Cardinal, an incarnate figure of Justice, stands over against him, erect, unharmed. Sheer force on one side, absolute Right on the other. That is Belgium's reply to 'Deutschland über Alles.' With it begins a better time for Europe and the world. Kneel down, Germans, and salute in this unconquerable though stricken people the Cross of Christ."

I headed this chapter, "The Triumph of Kultur." Ought I to have written rather its "Defeat"? Cardinal Mercier, the man of conscience, has therein sentenced his Majesty the Kaiser, the man of blood . . .

Yesterday, May the Seventh, was Lusitania Day. We commemorated the sinking by German craft of that unarmed Atlantic liner, when nearly twelve hundred men, women, and children perished off the coast of Ireland, among them one hundred Americans, and Father Basil Maturin, beloved of many of us.

I am about to narrate how the United States came to join the Allies. You will grant, dear reader, that the sinking of the *Lusitania* forms a perfect transition, not excelled by any in the literature of mankind.

CHAPTER XIV

America passes Judgment

THE end of my book now returns to the beginning, as a good composition ought; and I shall hope to round my ring. I began with England, the Treaty of Westphalia, the Hundred Days from October 1648 to January 30, 1649. But I held America in reserve and have never lost sight of it. For on that side of the ocean as well as on this the year 1649 marks a great commencement. Then it was that Lord Baltimore, the "proprietor" of Maryland, drew up and promulgated the Act of Toleration, which allowed Catholics and Protestants to live in peace under the same laws. This Catholic peer, says Bancroft, the standard historian, "was the first to make religious freedom the basis of the State." A more suggestive expression, in view of what kings and secular Governments have continually attempted, with troubles beyond calculation, is "the State's incompetence in religious matters." Jesuit philosophers of eminence—and few names rank higher in

the last three hundred years than the Jesuit Suarez, who wrote against King James I—had anticipated the limits set by Whigs to State authority. Suarez, indeed, has been called by some good Jacobite in his haste, "the first Whig"; but Dr. Johnson went farther back to find him, as we have all heard. In any case, even Spanish theologians denied the absolute power of the crown, long before Cromwell and his Ironsides, at Naseby in 1645, broke the Cæsarism which had got a footing in this Island with Tudors and Stuarts. We must therefore enlarge our vision of the Westphalian period, 1648-1649, and include America when we would speak of the new-birth of freedom.

Not, at the outset, Puritan America. Lord Acton, alluding to Maryland, points the difference. "The Catholic emigrants," he says, "established for the first time in modern history a government in which religion was free, and with it the germ of that religious liberty which now prevails in America. The Puritans, on the other hand, revived with greater severity the penal laws of the mother-country." Not Massachusetts but Rhode Island claims the honour of inaugurating a political peace among the Reformed, from

which in due time the American Constitution would derive its famous First Amendment of 1791: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press." At length we have reached a direct contradiction, set forth by the lawful authority of a sovereign state, to the *Jus Reformandi* granted to rulers at the Congress of Westphalia, by which they could compel their subjects to believe as the Prince ordered them. This 'monstrous regiment" of laymen had been at once condemned by Pope Innocent X. Now the American Constitution made it for ever impossible in the United States, which were destined to contain the largest number of Europeans by descent living under a single government, and that the government of their choice.

How these far-off events bore on the convulsions now, in the year 1917, tending with violence towards a solution, will appear from the narrative I take up at this point in my own way. It is still one of reminiscence.

In the spring of the year 1901 I was travelling with a fellow-priest in Sicily and Greece. We arrived in Athens on the Greek "Lady Day"; and, seated before our hotel, the

Minerva, in Stadion Street, we enjoyed the spectacle, which Socrates had witnessed down at the Piræus, or something not unlike it, called the "Lampadephoria," the torch-race, from the Kerameikos to the Acropolis. What we saw was a procession of the Athenian people bearing lights, the Army and Navy represented by select companies, marching up to the Parthenon, and singing as they moved in praise of Hellas, "Hail, dear land of liberty!" The American, too, sings that refrain. But these men of Athens were celebrating, as they did every year on that Feast of the Panagia, their deliverance from the Turkish yoke. We were glad to be there on such a night. And when Easter morning came I spent an hour in the Parthenon, while the sunlight struck through its marble columns, beautiful as lucent in their half-transparency. And the wine-dark sea lay beneath. There is no language equal to these moments; enough to have lived them.

Still do the words which Milton translated from his favourite among Greek poets, Euripides, describe Athens and Attica, "pure the air and light the soil"; and we pilgrims felt our thoughts brighten,

"διὰ λαμπροτάτου
βαίνοντες ἁβρῶς αἰθερέος,"

short as our stay could be. How shall we forget the morning when we found ourselves at Marathon, in that garden enclosed between the hills and the Aegean, as a carpet unfolded, rich with purple and tawny gold of the spring-tide flowers? It was like a sculptured bas-relief, tinted by the hand of Pheidias, clear yet opulent in a light undimmed, unflecked by any cloud. Our kind friend, the American Consul in Athens, accompanied us, and a young American priest who was then studying at the university. And we sat down near the "Soros," or mound, under which were buried the two hundred men of Attica who fell when the Persian host was beaten, to the saving of the world's freedom. Yes, on that day, nearly four-and-twenty centuries ago,

> " 'Let there be light,' said Liberty,
> And, like sunrise from the sea,
> Athens arose."

Our little band that morning were all convinced, ardent lovers of the ideals which, in his noblest of Funeral Orations, the Athenian Pericles held up to admiration, kindling a hope never to be quenched. The brave old Consul was a soldier who had in the War of Liberation been day after day "marching through Georgia" with Sherman, to Savannah

and the Atlantic. His fellow-countryman from the West could not imagine what an absolute Monarchy resembled; he had never seen one. My travelling companion was a Lancashire man, a scholar and a Radical servant of the people, whose lost children he gathered in his arms like the Good Shepherd, his Master. And I—but which is there of her sons, or her sons' sons, exiled from "sad Ierne," that could be other than a standard-bearer of liberty? We are known, in every Parliament and Congress whither we send our brothers to speak, as voting always on the side of popular rights. And be it remembered here that since Catholic Emancipation became the source of power—I mean, since the year 1832—perhaps not a single Liberal measure would have been carried triumphantly through the House of Commons except for the Irish Catholic vote. "Sad Ierne" has known too much and known too long what it is to lie at the mercy of a class and a caste.

And so, musing at Marathon, we could have said with Shelley, omitting one word, of which in an instant, "We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts, have their roots in Greece." Nay, dear Shelley, the Acropolis stands not hard by Sion's hill; there

is another, a loftier inspiration than "Know Thyself," writ above the oracle of Delphi, which created the true Humanities, I will grant you, but could do no more. The rest of that sentence we made our own. We talked of the swift wings of Freedom, which carried her from this hallowed mound over lands and oceans, to the "Island-throne, far in the West," to "far Atlantis," whence "against the course of heaven and doom" she came flying to rescue France from outworn despotisms and to shake all Europe, as the tempest shakes the sea. It is a circumstance to be noted. Our thoughts, too, ran upon the naval victory of Salamis, in whose waters we should be sailing ere long. As by and by we took our place in the Theatre of Athens, fancy might behold on that high stage the battle-piece devised by Aeschylus, wherein Persians and Athenians were described so vividly grappling with each other for the world's dominion that no modern scene could give it a stronger semblance. The memories of Byron had met us on our way past Missolonghi; we deciphered his name on one of the marble columns left of Athena's temple on Sunium height. Even to hateful Sparta we could allow one moment, that of Thermo-

pylæ, and call to it, "Stay, thou art so beautiful!" Our voyage through Ionian gulfs had brought us, and would take us again, in the neighbourhood of the Battle of Lepanto, when "apud Insulas Echinadas" the might of Christendom, blest and despatched against the Turk by St. Pius V, had shattered once for all the Moslem sea-power. These were the musings of which Marathon could give account on that fair morning, in the sculptural landscape, where Albion, Ierne, Atlantis, greeted the sun as he rode up the sky of Hellas. Our hearts thrilled to some echo from Shelley's prayer on the lips of dying, but yet unconquerable, Greeks—

> "O ye, who float around this clime, and weave
> The garment of the glory which it wears;
> Whose fame, though earth betray the dust it clasped,
> Lies sepulchred in monumental thought!
> Progenitors of all that yet is great!
> Ascribe to your bright senate, oh accept
> In your high ministrations us your sons—
> Us first, and the more glorious yet to come."

To come they were indeed, on the challenge of those latter-day Persians and their ambiguous Kaiser, who was Protestant in Berlin, a Catholic Charlemagne at the Vatican, protector of Moslems by his own creation at the Sublime Porte. And what share would Atlantis-America take

in Armageddon? For my part, I knew from the beginning and never doubted. To my friend in Athens, the Consul who marched with Sherman, I had spoken of the feeling with which I once looked down on the green slopes of the cemetery at Arlington, Virginia, where sixteen thousand of his fellow-combatants in the Civil War had found their last resting-place. The American Union realized a grander conception of Freedom than Greeks would have deemed possible, when its own citizens died in their prime that the coloured people should not be slaves any more. But in our Day of Doom

> "The earth rebels. And Good and Evil stake
> Their empire o'er the unborn world of men
> On this one cast."

In January 1915 I wrote: "No greater good in the political order has been achieved at any time than English freedom. I call it English, because the other peoples living in these islands did not create or defend its beginnings, and from England alone it was carried across the Atlantic. It is largely negative"—I pray you that detest the ways of Prussianism to attend —"setting bounds to State-power, distrusting Government, chafing under officials; but all these things it does from a positive and real

principle, which briefly we may term Conscience. Our freedom, as we know it, is an appeal not to custom or to force, but to the inward sense of right and wrong planted in every man's heart. That such appeals often issue in movements fanatical, grotesque, and almost insane, I shall not deny. But where criticism is forbidden freedom ceases; and while we pay the price, often severe, of our rooted unfaith in the powers that be, one advantage shines out, with a brightness as of the morning star amid clouds, on a world unlike England. Public opinion, established by this English-American tribunal, where each and all speak their minds, is in a fair way to become the conscience of civilised men. . . . Their judgment anticipates history. Riches cannot bribe, threats leave it undaunted. 'This is my throne, bid kings come bow to it,' cries Constance in the tragedy. We have seen the German Lord of War humbly suing at Washington to be favourably heard. But at home in England too, if his cause were just, he would not lack defenders. . . . The old inbred sense of fair-play (which is a word of sport, meaning justice) will not be satisfied until it has taken all the evidence into account, for and against the Fatherland, its rulers, gene-

rals, professors, fighting-men. And no British Government can browbeat the jury, or compel it to speak otherwise than it thinks."

That passage, and I am proud to be its author, stands on record. If I may keep up the analogy, which is in fact something more, the foreman of the jury was President Wilson. We speak of old habit in law of judge and jury, with good ground; but, after all and in the long run of public events, the jury, that is to say the nation, is also the judge. And the foreman collects the votes, to which he adds his own. This function Dr. Wilson fulfilled to the letter. He listened long and attentively to the democratic millions. From them he held his mandate. Though elected a second time, he was no absolute ruler, but just a man out of the crowd to do the nation's bidding. I do not call the nation a crowd, far from it. There is a vital distinction which Victor Hugo taught with his customary pomp of words and in strong colours, when a false France elected Napoleon III to be its chief in 1869 after he had been its executioner in 1851. The nation is a juridical, a moral entity; the crowd comes of chance, the nation of law. President Wilson was waiting until the nation of America had made up its con-

science. He waited from August 1, 1914, down to April 2, 1917.

And the world's agony went on, growing in violence, while the Day of Judgment meted out its slow hours. I remember a sad case of a poor fellow dreadfully hurt in one of the Birmingham factories, whom a friend of mine attended as a priest during the paroxysms of pain, and how the sufferer cried, "O my God, I am ready if you are ready." He could not bear it, he looked for death as release. So it was with all the unhappy nations which the war took and tortured. They yearned after Peace. And who was it that kept the slaughter going? Baron Burian, the Austrian Minister, has spoken, like the Chancellor of the Kaiser, a winged word. "The people," he said; "what have the people to do with it? All they have got to do is to look on." They were to look on while Baron Burian diplomatised with all they possessed. But when it came to fighting, they would have to work, and suffer, and starve, and see their sons taken for the war, and receive them back wounded, or maimed, or never at all. Have these no right to choose whether kings shall quarrel unto the death—of their subjects? President Wilson was more than a king, the

people's choice; therefore he must collect their verdict before acting. Meanwhile, though the battle of the Marne was decisive of the final issue, Kultur went on with its triumphs.

I am not proposing to describe them. Neither will I attempt any summing up of the successes and failures of the Allies. These things are burnt into our memories. The Kaiser's rage was that of a Bearsark, mad and homicidal. As he did unto Belgium, so was it done to the French departments held by his "frightful" armies. This new Constantine sacked, burnt, and ruined no fewer than one thousand three hundred and sixty Catholic churches in the lands he was passing over. Russia—who shall venture to speak a word about Russia now? The true Russia, the German-held Russia; the court with its incredible Rasputin, its irresponsible Tsaritza, its vacillating Tsar; the visionary peace-parties, and betrayed armies; and, at last, the Revolution—here is "stuff of the conscience" for future historians.

I mark four points and leave them: the invasion of East Prussia, followed by the smashing defeat of Tannenberg, August 26-31, 1914, which invasion contributed effectually to our success on the Marne and deserves

eternal gratitude; the Tsar's proclamation to Poland, promising complete autonomy, but rendered of none effect by the permanent camarilla which has always ruled and overruled the sovereign; the utter destruction of Poland, for which the Russians must answer, being perhaps yet more guilty than the German hosts, and in any case cruel on a vast front, with Siberia to eat up the driven myriads of Poles when Warsaw and the country were evacuated; the sudden, let us hope the definite, fall of the Romanoffs; and the wonderful but anxious disclosure to Europe of a democratic Russia in March 1917. Will the old, bureaucratic, Germanised Petersburg, now called Petrograd, be converted and live? Or will it, as in other days of crisis, hold on until it has got the upper hand of Moscow? I know where my affections incline me: the Russia which means the people has boundless though inarticulate genius, in religion, in humanity. May it find its way or make it!

Quitting all else which would keep me from my conclusion, I have now to remark that it was the German *Schrecklichkeit,* or system of terror, pursued over lands and seas, which convinced the long-hesitating American jury

to give in the verdict of "Guilty" and proceed to sentence and execution. Of this whole "State-trial of an Empire," the case of the *Lusitania* will afford to historians the model, the argument, and the governing instance. The *Lusitania* was destroyed, deliberately and wantonly, on May 7, 1915. Two years afterwards, Germany, as was evident, had been practising for many months of set purpose (and all along as occasion allowed under false pretence), the destruction of unarmed vessels, allied or neutral, not carrying contraband, with entire disregard of treaties, of the Hague Convention, and of the human beings involved. The Central Empires had given up all expectation of a decision in their favour on land. The invention of the submarine seemed to make it possible at sea, by starving out England. That remarkable change in the situation, by which Britain had raised an army of millions, doing splendid and probably decisive work in France—though very heavy losses were incurred at Gallipoli—had driven the Germans to their last resource. On the submarine campaign they staked their all. If it broke every law of international peace among neutrals, and of the conduct of belligerents towards them, that could not be helped.

What were neutrals, what the United States, but a larger Belgium? Germany must "hack her way through."

"There are no laws of war," said the German War-Book, "but only fear of reprisals." From this it follows that if Britain had stopped every means, direct and indirect, by which food, materials, and munitions could enter Germany, the Kaiser would have had no solid ground of complaint. And where, in 1914, was the neutral Power that could protect its sea-going craft from British attacks? Had England made use then, as Germany did afterwards, of the forces at her disposal, without regard to aught except her own immediate interests, we may very well doubt if the war would have lasted a year. These considerations ought to be carefully weighed. England had the power, but she did not judge that she had the right, to stop all neutral traffic with the Central Empires. She entered into agreements, especially in the case of Holland, Denmark, and Scandinavia, by which, as many have contended, her blockade lost much of its effect and the enemy was able to recover from the defeats inflicted on him economically and in general resources. Yet Germany, while trampling upon right without

scruple, demanded the utmost regard from the Allies whom she was poisoning with deadly gas; from the Belgians, thousands of whom she was deporting as slaves to far distant places, where the men would be compelled to work and starve, the women to suffer dishonour; and from America, in the very act of breaking the promises she had solemnly made. The "Black Book" of outrages committed by her troops is a document which brands them with infamy. But of equal immorality and lawlessness we are bound to accuse Kaiser, Chancellor, and Government, after reading the long record of chicane, of falsehood, and of smug hypocrisy which stands side by side with her catalogue of brutal crime.

President Wilson held on his course deliberately, expostulating with Berlin as outrages came to shock the world, speaking of "strict accountability" for them and, at the same time, refusing to take any measures which could be thought a provocation. Even his protests when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed found in Mr. W. J. Bryan, the Secretary of State, an interpreter so pacific that Berlin took no heed of its warnings. At length, on the declaration of a submarine campaign in

which German torpedoes would "sink every vessel at sight" which dared to enter an imaginary "danger-zone" created round the British Isles and in the Mediterranean, it was felt that America must act or abdicate her claim to be a great Power. The notice served upon Washington was framed in terms of high contempt. One American vessel might ply between its ports and Falmouth once a week, provided that its character was shown by a harlequin habiliment of stripes "alternately white and red." And the plea of "humanity" for starving Germany, the need to finish the war as soon as possible, reminded us of Herr von Jagow and his word, "Time is our asset."

Before taking the final step, President Wilson had issued a manifesto, in which he pleaded with all the belligerents to name their terms of peace. The central Empires wanted a Conference—the mere holding of which would have weakened the Allies, as both sides well knew—but the Kaiser would state no terms. Most happily for the cause of justice, the Allies produced their answer, admirably written in French, which laid down principles and foreshadowed proposals that left no loophole for ambiguities. The Ten Powers

arrayed against the Four had come to a perfect understanding. They refused the suggestion that both groups were alike "as regards the responsibilities of the past and guarantees for the future." Their aim was to safeguard the independence of the peoples, with right and humanity. What did they demand, therefore? Seven points were enumerated, viz.—

"The restoration of Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, with due compensation; the evacuation of invaded territories in France, Russia, and Rumania, with just reparation; the reorganisation of Europe, guaranteed by a stable *régime,* based on respect for nationalities, and on the right to full security and liberty of economic development possessed by all peoples, small and great; territorial conventions and international settlements such as to guarantee land and sea frontiers against unjustified attack, the restitution of provinces formerly torn from the Allies by force or against the will of the inhabitants; the liberation of the Italians, as also of the Slavs, Rumanes, and Czecho-Slovaks, from foreign domination; the setting free of the populations subject to the bloody tyranny of the Turks, and the turning out of Europe of

the Ottoman Empire; lastly, the reconstitution of Poland as indicated in the Russian Emperor's manifestation to his army. And while desiring to shield Europe from the covetous brutality of Prussian militarism, the Allies cherished no design hostile to the German people, whose political existence they were not assailing."

I may subjoin, as if a marginal note, that the new Russian Government has published an exceedingly noble proclamation, which leaves to Poland the entire choice and charge of its future destinies. The Polish national party, and its consummate leader, M. Roman Dmowski, deserve our heartiest felicitations on this reward of their efforts in a great European cause.

Now we approach the crowning event of the struggle which has gone on, with varying fortunes, since the Petition of Rights was signed and broken by King Charles I (1628-1629) down to the evening of April 2, 1917, when President Wilson, his guards about him with drawn swords, drove from the White House, Washington, to the Capitol, and there addressed the Congress in session assembled. The occasion was to lay before the nation's representatives a motion that they should

empower the President to declare a "state of war" as existing between the United States and Germany. The motives for so doing were exhibited in a document which will last while America remains a people, and which is nothing else than a commentary, exact and just, on the Declaration of Independence.

To sum up and to close the World's Debate, by a judgment condemning autocracy in its chief representative the German Kaiser, has fallen to President Wilson's lot. Thereby he becomes, after Washington and Lincoln, the third Founder of the United States. Calmly, without passion—"like a priest at the altar," said one reporter of the scene,—he delivered his sentence to all civilised nations looking on, while he drew out the terrible indictment of high crimes which Germany had perpetrated with malice aforethought. The Imperial Government "had put aside all restraints of law or humanity"; and "vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, character, cargo, destination, or errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom, without thought of help or mercy for those on board—the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents." Hence, "the present German

warfare against commerce is a war against mankind." Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. "There is one choice we cannot make," said the President; "we will not choose the part of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored and violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are not common wrongs: they cut to the very root of human life." Then he pronounced the first part of his sentence on the culprit. "With a profound sense of the solemn, even the tragical, character of the step I am now taking . . . I advise that Congress declare the recent course of the German Imperial Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of a belligerent which is thus thrust upon it; and that it . . . exert all its power and employ its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war."

But from the facts President Wilson went on to their cause. "The menace to peace and freedom," so he declared, "lies in the existence of autocratic Governments backed by organised force which is controlled wholly

by their will and not by the will of their people." He dwelt on the spying and the lying by which, carried on from generation to generation, a plan to strike and conquer could be engineered; and he said, "We are accepting this challenge because we know that in such a Government we can never have a friend, and that in its presence there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world." Once more, "the world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon trusted foundations of political liberty." He advocated a League of Honour, but excluded from it Hohenzollerns and Habsburgs by the stern remark that "no autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it." He gloried in the new freedom of the Russian people, as he had already insisted on the restoration of Poland to its place among the nations. He looked for the liberation of Germany itself. The dedication followed. "The day has come," so ended this historic utterance, "when America is privileged to spend her blood and might for the principles that gave her birth and the happiness and peace she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

On Good Friday, 1865, Abraham Lincoln was murdered in Washington, because he had broken the Slave-Power. On Good Friday, 1917, President Wilson signed the Resolution voted by Congress, declaring a state of war with Germany. The self-sacrifice of Lincoln and Dr. Wilson's supreme act do not differ at all in the motive. Both are the expression of Eternal Justice, moving to its end by the laws of a great nation and the conscience of its chosen leaders. Lincoln's victory in death was touching and sublime. Its light shines on the sword of Righteousness drawn at length by President Wilson, destined to protect humanity, and justify the ways of God to men.

CHAPTER XV

The Vision of Peace

WHEN America joined the League of Honour, which Britain had in truth founded on August 4, 1914, by challenging Germany on behalf of violated Belgium, the political shape of the future was determined. Autocracy must go out, democracy had come in. That, however, should be deemed, not a Revolution in the sense of anarchy, but the rising to light and power of an established Catholic principle, held by St. Thomas Aquinas, Bellarmine, Suarez, and our greatest theologians. For they have taught that always there is in the nation as such a fundamental democracy, which indeed is none other than Aristotle's "government of free men and equals." More justly we might describe it as a Restoration. I quote Macaulay on this subject with pleasure. Reviewing Hallam's *Constitutional History,* he observes that "the Constitution of England was only one of a large family.

In all the monarchies of western Europe, during the Middle Ages, there existed restraints on the royal authority, fundamental laws, and representative assemblies. In the fifteenth century the government of Castile seems to have been as free as that of our own country. That of Aragon was beyond all question more so. In France the sovereign was more absolute. Yet, even in France, the States-General alone could constitutionally impose taxes . . . Sweden and Denmark had constitutions of a similar description." Then Macaulay adds most pointedly, "Let us overleap two or three hundred years, and contemplate Europe at the commencement of the eighteenth century. Every free constitution, save one, had gone down. That of England had weathered the danger, and was riding in full security."

What had come about elsewhere? Simply this, that hereditary rulers had taken to heart the political principles of the Renaissance, absorbed each in his own person all the powers of the State, and called his usurped prerogatives Divine Right. What is happening now? The reversal and overthrow of Renaissance principles in politics, by a movement derived from the Catholic Middle Ages surviving in England, transplanted to America, and re-

turning thence; thus fulfilling better than he dreamt the prophetic song of Shelley, which I have partly cited before—

> "From the West swift Freedom came,
> Against the course of heaven and doom,
> A second sun arrayed in flame
> To burn, to kindle, to illume."

Many are the signs dawning on the watcher of stars and seasons that the Catholic Middle Ages will return, purified, enlightened, but in the essence of their faith and freedom unchanged. Let me indulge myself in a formal scheme of symbols, not without significance.

The thing that is coming to pass, amid scenes from the Apocalypse of tragedies imaged in heaven, is the change from the Tribe to the City. Not the supremacy of race but the dictates of reason shall henceforth rule between man and man. Now there are three cities, each chosen by Providence to embody and to realise the chief different aspects of rational humanity: Athens, Rome, Jerusalem—the City of Light, the City of Law, and the City of God. To each corresponds a sovereign ideal: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—the liberty of the individual to make the best of himself, the equality of all in a common right, the brotherhood of all as

children of the same All-Father. Thus we can regard Humanity as the Church in its earthly and social relations; and again, the Church as Humanity in its relations to its Maker. And while Revelation is an utterly free gift beyond man's power, not simply a republication of Natural Religion, but all that the Gospel claims for it, still grace does not destroy Nature but bring it to perfection, transfigured with Christ on Mount Tabor. The reconcilement of these ideals, each so lofty and exacting that it might seem to deny the others, is man's task in time; and according to the degree of its fulfilment it is bringing us nearer to the Vision of Peace. . . .

To-day Rome is much in my thoughts. Or more truly I am in Rome, and in the spirit I keep there the anniversary of my ordination as a priest on May 11, 1873, forty-four years ago. It is also a memorable date for my venerated Diocesan, the Most Reverend Edward Ilsley, Archbishop of Birmingham, who enters to-day on his eightieth year. I offer his Grace my respectful homage and best wishes. Looking back over my own time, marked by such great public calamities, and seen to be a turning-point in the history of mankind, I discern, it seems to me, that all

its problems run up into one problem, the reconciliation of Democracy with the Catholic Church. That the Church and the People should arrive at a common understanding. That the City should worship Christ in its own cathedral. That all ways should meet in Rome at the Golden Milestone, as they did when "the immense majesty of the Roman Peace" girdled the Mediterranean with a united realm of one hundred and twenty millions no longer at strife; but then they had a master, and now we have done with masters. The Athenians are our true ancestors, "bondsmen of no Great King," but free men and equal. The true modern king may be hereditary; he shall not be absolute. Autocracy is stricken to death; it will be lying under an epitaph to-morrow. But Rome survives, and round about its "sacred and immemorial throne" we desire to see all the nations of the earth gathered as a Holy Roman People.

The vision is for a time, yet my faith is that it will come to be fulfilled; and that the war which ends absolute rulers closes an era of political anarchy to open one of many brave and beautiful reconcilements. I shall pray for that when I renew my first Mass,—which took place at the very Confession of St. Peter

in Rome—here in the English Church dedicated to his name. And I shall call to mind the great price we are paying for this new age of light, liberty, and faith in God.

A dear price in the lives of dear friends. These are my dead soldiers of whom I make remembrance at the altar day by day: Francis Purcell Warren, George William Doogan, Nicholas Angell, William Henry Lovell, Harry Winyard, Edward Curwen. The good Father be gracious to them, and comfort their kindred! Among them were to be found gifts and accomplishments of no mean order in music, science, and literature. They died that England might live. Nay, not England alone, but all our youthful Commonwealths; and India, that shall be taught freedom as the mighty morn gathers light; and Belgium, that shall rise again glorious; and Poland, whose torn limbs shall come together once more in a crimson halo signifying her martyrdom turned to triumph; and the innumerable Slavs, whom the Spirit of God has quickened so that they make haste to meet us who are hastening to them. And because of these young men slain when they were fighting valiantly in this world-wide crusade, Ireland shall be a nation once again;

and Italy shall enchant our eyes with her beauty bred of the Greek sculpture, flushed with the rose of the Italian heart; and a way shall be found to bring the Holy Father and his Rome into a perpetual friendship with the people whose greatest glory is the Chair of Truth, as their land is the "irremovable seat of civilisation." And because our heroes died joyfully, casting their lives away with a laugh, all these shall begin the better time when wealth may mean nothing save the larger public service, and labour mean so much as the enduring, indispensable, and recognised foundation of the State. Our Prometheus shall at last be unbound.

THE END

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The world's debate

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